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POLITICAL PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY IN HAITI

by

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June 2001

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POLITICAL PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY IN HAITI

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A nation attains democratic consolidation when democratic ideals become permanently established within its society. An institutionalized political party system is a prerequisite for democratic consolidation and is based on stable rules of interparty competition, parties with stable social roots, and party organizations independent of individuals' ambitions. Additionally, all actors must accord legitimacy to a party system in order for it to be institutionalized.

This thesis focuses on the political party system in Haiti and how its lack of institutionalization has undermined the consolidation of democracy. It also examines the factors that are responsible for this lack of development. Such factors include the actions of Haitian elites, lack of social organization, and a lack of party development during the earliest stages of state building.

The impact of United States foreign policies upon this nation's party system are examined in order to discover which policies have assisted party system institutionalization and which have hindered its development. While the entirety of Haitian political history is reviewed, an emphasis is placed upon United States policy since the 1991 ouster of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. In conclusion, this thesis recommends future United States policies designed to assist in the institutionalization of Haiti's political party system.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A nation attains democratic consolidation when democratic ideals become permanently established within its society. An institutionalized political party system, which is based on stable rules of interparty competition and is accorded legitimacy by all political actors, is one of the prerequisites for democratic consolidation.

In Building Democratic Institutions, Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully argue that four conditions characterize an institutionalized party system: (1) stability in the rules and the nature of interparty competition; (2) major parties have stable roots in society; (3) major political actors accord legitimacy to the electoral process and to the parties; (4) party organizations are independent of individuals' ambitions. Applying this framework, this thesis demonstrates that the political party system in Haiti has failed to attain these four conditions. It describes how this failure has undermined the consolidation of democracy in Haiti, both historically and particularly in the post-1990 period.

In explaining why these conditions have not been met, this thesis identifies three primary factors that can inhibit party system institutionalization in any nation: a lack of social organization via shared interests such as those generated by religion or economic class; an absence of initial party development during the earliest phases of state building; the behavior of government elites, such as attempts to maintain power through political repression and corrupt practices.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine Haiti's political system before and after *Operation Uphold Democracy* in 1994 and find that all three of these inhibiting factors are and have

been prevalent in Haiti. They must be overcome before an institutionalized political party system can be established and democratic consolidation attained.

The impact of United States foreign policies upon this nation's party system are examined in Chapter 5 to discover which policies have assisted party system institutionalization and which have hindered its development. While the entirety of Haitian political history is reviewed, an emphasis is placed upon United States policy since the ouster of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991. This chapter shows that due to the extent and severity of these factors undermining party institutionalization in Haiti, outside assistance is required, and the United States should continue to assist Haiti in accomplishing party system institutionalization.

Chapter 6 presents several recommended policy courses for the United States to follow in order to assist Haiti as it attempts to institutionalize its party system. In summation, the United States must acknowledge that past abuses of power still undermine the Haitian electorate's confidence in political and economic elites. An institutionalization of the party system will almost assuredly have to come about gradually, since time will be required for all Haitians to develop trust and confidence in their party system.

Additionally, efforts should be continued to develop Haiti's stagnant economy, as this factor continues to social disorganization which greatly hinders party institutionalization. Currently, the Department of State is pursuing such policies through both diplomatic and financial assistance, and such programs should be continued.

The final, and most critical, factor that Haiti must overcome is the corrupt and selfish interests of political elites. It is imperative that the United States continues its

efforts to hold Haitian elites accountable to the ideals and rules of their democratic system in order for party system institutionalization to continue. Ultimately, however, while foreign assistance can help, Haitian political leaders themselves must be willing to place the political party system above their own opportunistic interests.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The election of President Aristide in December 1990 was a cause for much optimism in both Haiti and the rest of the international democratic community. Aristide, a Catholic priest and representative of the poor, was elected President of Haiti with an overwhelming majority of nearly 70%. All those involved, including international observers, acknowledged this election as being the first free and fair election of any type in modern Haiti. The era of authoritarian elitist politics had seemingly ended. This victory for Haitian democracy, however, would not last.

On September 30, 1991, a military coup ousted President Aristide after only nine months of democratic rule. After the President's ouster, a ruthless military junta led by Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras ruled Haiti for over three years. His brutal regime came to an end only after a U.S.-led intervention led the way for Aristide's reinstatement as Haiti's President. Since the 1994 restoration of Haiti's legitimate government, this nation's embryonic democracy has performed dismally in many respects. How can this be explained?

This thesis suggests that the lack of an institutionalized party system has contributed to the current difficulties in Haiti. It defends the theory that an institutionalized political party system must be developed if a fledgling democracy is to consolidate. Without such a party system, elites will be more likely to rule by exploiting populist support. Such leaders attain political office through their popularity with the masses and the promises they make during elections. The result is often a mix of policies and initiatives undertaken by a predatory leader with the goal of self-advancement and personal enrichment. Furthermore, without an institutionalized party system and socially

established parties, political participation and legitimacy suffer, as the will of the electorate is often not accurately reflected. Additionally, an institutionalized party system provides the basis for the necessary compromises that inevitably arise between political platforms in a democracy.

Haiti's lack of an institutionalized political party system has resulted in ongoing political turmoil, demonstrated by a parliamentary collapse and suspension following controversial legislative elections in 1997. Even in the past months, the lack of an institutionalized party system has created a schism between the ruling party and a democratic alternative that seeks political power outside of Haiti's legitimate democratic system. Such actions hamper democratic consolidation, the process by which "democracy becomes so broadly and profoundly legitimate among its citizens that it is unlikely to break down."[1]

This scenario is present not only in Haiti. Throughout Latin America, as well as the rest of the world, powerful political elites unduly dominate ostensibly democratic governments where non-institutionalized party systems exist. In the past, such scenarios have hampered U.S. attempts to further democratic consolidation in Haiti and elsewhere. Any future U.S. efforts to promote democratization must include efforts to institutionalize weak or nonexistent party systems.

The Haitian case is studied in order to understand the obstacles that non-institutionalized party systems pose to democratic consolidation. In addition, the case

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[1] Diamond, 1996, p. 54.

offers insights into the possible contributions U.S. policy might make to party institutionalization. The thesis asks:

- How institutionalized is the current Haitian political party system? How has this affected democratic consolidation?

- What have been, and continue to be, obstacles to institutionalization? What actions can overcome these obstacles?

- How has United States policy affected the development of institutionalized political parties in Haiti before, during, and after the 1994 intervention?

Chapter II describes the functions parties perform in a democracy, explores the meaning of "institutionalization," and delineates the requirements for an institutionalized party system. Then, in order to ascertain the difficulties encountered in forming an institutionalized party system within Haiti, this struggling nation is examined vis-à-vis factors that either inhibit or assist party institutionalization in any incipient democracy.

Chapter III describes the Haitian political system, beginning from the fight for independence in the late 18th century to the 1994 U.S.-led military intervention. This chapter provides a background on the political history and culture of Haiti, a nation dominated by violent and ruthless leaders who cared little for either the will of the people or the rule of law. It clarifies how the past political environment prevented the emergence of institutionalized parties, the absence of which continues to haunt and handicap Haitian democracy.

This chapter then examines President Aristide and his personal political party, Lavalas. Aristide, a man whose personal charisma rapidly carried him to the presidency

in 1990, is the central figure in modern Haiti's democracy. This chapter will examine how Aristide's actions and relations with the other sectors of the government, including his own and other parties, contributed to political turmoil that ultimately resulted in his ouster. Ultimately, this chapter shows that Haiti's non-institutionalized party system contributed to this chain of events.

Chapter IV demonstrates that the Haitian party system has failed to achieve institutionalization since the 1994 intervention and chronicles how this has undermined the consolidation of democracy in Haiti. One of the primary factors behind this failure was the actions of political elites within Haiti. Primarily, both President Aristide and his opponents have been unwilling to make compromises in order to develop the necessary rules and framework of an institutionalized party system.

Chapter V examines how the United States government has attempted to foster democratic consolidation worldwide, in Latin America, and in Haiti. An assessment is made of U.S. policy historically towards Haiti and in particular the impact of these policies on the institutionalization of the party system. The chapter then focuses on the impact of the Clinton administration's efforts to reestablish and then institutionalize democratic institutions, especially the party system, in Haiti following the ouster of President Aristide. Although U.S. efforts towards furthering the institutionalization of the Haitian party system have met with some success, much remains to be done, and the need for U.S. involvement in Haiti is as great now as it ever has been.

Chapter VI offers recommendations for future U.S. policy towards Haiti. First, the United States should realize that the institutionalization of this nation's party system will

require many years of involvement and cannot be achieved through short-term efforts. The United States also must provide further assistance towards ensuring that Haiti's government offers a fair and balanced representative system in which both majority and minority interests are heard and incorporated into government policy.

Additionally, the United States should maintain both financial and political support for Haiti in its efforts to improve the nation's economic structure. Economic development will be crucial in order to overcome the lack of a middle class and an impoverished lower class, factors that have hindered party system institutionalization.

Finally, the United States should continue in its efforts to hold Haitian elites accountable to the ideals and rules of a democratic system. The repressive and corrupt behavior of Haitian elites has more than any other factor inhibited party system institutionalization. All other efforts will be fruitless if the United States allows political elites to pursue their own limited and personal goals at the expense of their nation's party system. Such actions will undermine not only the institutionalization of the party system, but it also will threaten the very existence of democracy in Haiti.

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II.   INSTITUTIONALIZED PARTY SYSTEMS

This chapter examines democratic consolidation and how political party institutionalization plays a critical role in this process. It reviews the functions parties perform in any democratic political system, such as providing an avenue for participation and aggregating interests. It then defines an "institutionalized" party system and the components thereof. Of equal importance, the factors that inhibit the development of an institutionalized party system are also examined. This framework will be used in subsequent chapters in order to evaluate the level of party institutionalization in Haiti, the factors that have contributed to this situation, and the impact it has had on democratic consolidation.

A.   DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

Within the past decade, many nations that were formerly under authoritarian rule have been increasingly successful in embracing liberal ideals and adopting democratic governments. For example, the dissolution of the Soviet Union not only dealt a serious blow to international Communist ideology, but it was also the most important collapse of a non-democratic regime since the conclusion of the Second World War. Even before the revolutions of the early 1990's in Eastern Europe occurred, however, democratic movements in Latin America were already replacing repressive regimes. The collapse of Argentina's former military government in 1983 is an example of this phenomenon.

Despite many transitions to democracy throughout the world, less progress has been made towards democratic consolidation. A concise definition of democratic consolidation is a wide-ranging process, "…by which democracy becomes so broadly and profoundly legitimate among its citizens that it is unlikely to break down. It involves

behavioral and institutional changes that normalize democratic politics and narrow its uncertainty."[2] Further clarified by Philippe Schmitter, democratic consolidation may be defined as:

> The process of transforming the accidental arrangements, prudential norms, and contingent solutions that have emerged during the transition into relations of cooperation and competition that are reliably known, regularly practiced, and voluntarily accepted by those persons or collectivities (i.e., politicians and citizens) that participate in democratic governance).[3]

Due to the complexity of this process, Schmitter acknowledges that consolidation as a whole is difficult to define or identify within any democracy. Therefore, it is often advantageous to break down democracies into their component parts, such as political parties or social movements, in order to examine how they each contribute to cooperation, competition, and voluntary acceptance. To this end, Schmitter offers a framework that demonstrates the various ways in which social groups are represented in a democracy, and have their ensuing conflicts resolved, through several different spheres or "partial regimes" such as trade associations, religion-based movements, and political parties.[4] The development of each of these spheres is critical for a democracy to be successful. However, each of these elements requires a separate analysis of their impact on a nation's level of democratic consolidation. This thesis focuses on the partial regime of political parties and how the institutionalization of this element is a prerequisite for

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[2] Diamond, 1996, p. 54.

[3] Schmitter, 1992, p. 158.

[4] Schmitter, 1992, p. 160.

democratic consolidation. The following section examines the contributions that parties make to the functioning of democracy.

B.   THE IMPORTANCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN A DEMOCRACY

Many scholars and political actors hold different definitions of what defines a "political party" and what are the most important aspects of such an organization. Some view parties in an idealistic light such as the British writer and politician Edmund Burke. In 1770, he declared, "[A] Party is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavors the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they all agreed." Others, however, see a political party primarily as a *realpolitik* tool for achieving political office. For example, in 1985, Joseph Schlesinger stated, "A political party is a group organized to gain control of government in the name of the group by winning election to public office."[5]

Political parties fit both these definitions, in addition to many others. Perhaps William Nisbet Chambers offered the best single definition of a political party. In 1967 he stated,

> (A) political party in the modern sense may be thought of as a relatively durable social formation which seeks offices or power in government, exhibits a structure or organization which links leaders at the centers of government to a significant popular following in the political arena and its local enclaves, and generates in-group perspectives or at least symbols of identification or loyalty.[6]

Clearly, based upon these different perceptions, political parties may serve many functions in a democracy, some obvious while others more sublime. This thesis, however,

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[5] Beck, 1992, p. 8.

[6] Beck, 1992, p. 8.

focuses on four main functions: establishing political participation, aggregating interests, instilling party discipline, and strengthening executive-legislative relations. Each of these important functions and their relevance to democratic consolidation is discussed in the following sections.

1.   Establishing Political Participation

The stability of a modernizing political system depends on the strength of its political parties. A party, in turn, is strong to the extent that it has institutionalized mass support.[7]

Political parties themselves are the essential elements of any effective party system, and while they serve many roles, their ultimate responsibility is to act as vehicles for mass political participation. Vigorous party recruitment for new membership allows formerly unorganized segments of society to share a common identity as they eventually consolidate into distinct political parties. This process in turn allows for the organized political representation of the masses within a government system, with each party serving as an enduring champion for a specific platform.

Parties are able to mitigate barriers that would otherwise prevent most individuals from realistically competing for a political position. By providing organizational and financial resources and party name recognition, political parties allow capable individuals who are lacking personal wealth or a famous family name to compete for public office. Parties also allow for continued political involvement even when a party's opponent is in power, since parties possess independent bureaucracies that continue to function even when party representatives are not in control of a nation's highest offices. This results in

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[7] Huntington, 1968, p. 408.

a constant challenge to the party in power, since an opposing political party provides the chance for opponents to remain politically active.

Establishing political participation among a nation's citizens is critical for many reasons, the most important being the attainment of democratic legitimacy. Legitimacy is attained when a significant percentage of the population accepts and has faith in the government, directly supporting the democratic ideal that the legitimacy of the government resides with the will of the people. While there is no mandatory level of voter turnout required to certify a democracy as "legitimate," active and widespread voter participation is an indication of a widely accepted, and therefore legitimized, party system. Decreased voter turnout or wide shifts among voter loyalties vis-à-vis individual parties may signal that the legitimacy of both the party system, and possibly the entire democratic system, may be waning among a nation's citizens.

Securing popular participation through a party system is imperative in order to defend against those who would attempt to usurp political power through non-democratic means. A party system that only has the backing of a minority of the population is more vulnerable to overthrow by the military or other elites who can make credible claims to represent the people. Once political elites realize that the population would not recognize power achieved through any means outside of elections, any illegal attempts to attain political power become much less likely.

2. Aggregating Interests

In addition to facilitating political participation, parties also aggregate the interests of their members into cohesive and clearly defined platforms. This is important for a number of reasons. First, it permits parties to posses sufficiently concentrated

political power to affect policy, whereas small factions of society or most individuals would not be able to do so on their own. Second, it would be nearly impossible for elected representatives to reach a working compromise on any policy if there were as many viewpoints as there were representatives. Finally, these aggregated interests afford legitimacy to democracy, since the ideological platforms of elected representatives enjoy the support of many individuals instead of being the beliefs of a few individuals in power.

Every citizen in a democracy has his or her own views on countless subjects that affect the state. Individual voices, however, are often insufficient in making any discernible impact on government policies. Fortunately, political parties are able to condense individual positions into effective, concentrated political efforts supported by the large numbers of voters within the organization. The compromises and positions that constitute a political platform will inevitably conflict slightly with some individual members' ideas. Nonetheless, this fact is necessary and inevitable, as party platforms transform rabbles of voices into orchestrated party efforts often sufficiently powerful enough to influence change within the government.

Although parties must respond to the changing wishes of their members, they must also maintain allegiance to their basic ideological platforms. By remaining ideologically stable, a party provides identifiable symbolism to its members and throughout society. While ideological platforms are shifted in response to party membership pressure, such philosophical changes must be gradual. Otherwise, parties may be perceived as abandoning their principles and in turn lose legitimacy throughout the body politic.

Membership in a political party serves as an easily identifiable beacon as to what a specific candidate or official believes in and what policies he will fight for on behalf of his constituents. Such a conceptual shortcut provided by a political party allows mass democracy to work effectively. In consolidating democracies with millions of people, it is optimistic to assume that the vast majority of voters will have an in-depth knowledge of each candidate's platform and beliefs. Ultimately, if elective democracies are to succeed, the vast majority of voters must be able to vote with confidence not so much for individual candidates, but for the institutionalized political parties that they represent.[8]

In a consolidated democracy, political parties are the main agents of representation for a nation's citizens. Although parties have some control over deciding what issues make it on the national agenda, many other issues become controversial independently of party actions. If a party does not directly address and take part in the public debate over these issues, it will lose power to other parties that do. If all parties fail to aggregate these interests, they risk not only losing power but also delegitimize the entire party system and, with it, the system of elected government.

3. Instilling Party Discipline

In addition to aggregating citizens' political interests, parties also instill discipline in and demand accountability from political representatives.[9] The continued success of an elected representative often depends upon identification with, and the support of, a political party. By being a representative of a party, an official is identified with an established and commonly known ideology and purpose. Since their political fate is tied

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[8] See Mainwaring, 1995, p. 3.

[9] See Linz, 1992, pp. 188-190, for supporting and contrasting views concerning party discipline.

directly to that of the party organization's, they cannot stray too far from the party line without risking having their party confront or even abandon them. Such continuing commitment to a certain ideology is ultimately beneficial for the constituents of an elected official. This is so since through continued party obedience, a representative will not appreciably deviate from the policies that his constituency elected him to defend and pursue.

Although they are the products of a democratic process, executives who come to power in the absence of an institutionalized party system often choose or are forced into taking actions that are detrimental to democracy. Since an executive's political fate is not directly tied to the success of a party, and since he is not tethered to any party ideology, he is able to rule with little or no internal checks upon his power. He can make decisions that directly benefit his interests without fear of party retribution or appearing to be ideologically inconsistent. Conversely, however, he cannot depend upon a party for support. Without the support of an institutionalized party, such executives must seek to maintain their legitimacy by following immediate and popular policies that win the support of a base constituency while paying little heed to the long-range implications of their actions.

However, when an executive represents an established political party, such an organization can check these potentially destructive executive actions. For example, political party leaders can greatly assist in instilling party discipline by controlling incumbents and candidates alike through their ability to withhold financial and organizational resources that are essential for effective election (and reelection) campaigns. Party leaders can also restrain unduly personalized actions of members once

in office by forcing party members in both the executive and legislative branches to account for party mandates when making decisions. Party leaders possess such influence by being able to withdraw organized party support for unacceptable initiatives, thus undermining the efforts of unfaithful party representatives.

4. Strengthening Executive-Legislative Relations

While instilling discipline and party accountability upon political leaders, parties can simultaneously promote strong relations between the legislative and the executive branches of a government. An institutionalized party system with viable parties can greatly increase the chances of efficient executive-legislative relations. A system with weak parties, however, can jeopardize the efficient interaction between the legislative and executive branches of a democracy.

For example, a president or prime minister can seldom rely upon charismatic leadership, personal appeal, or even evangelical allure to provide continued political support from his constituents. While such traits are of great assistance during a campaign, and personal leadership qualities are always invaluable, sustained political support based on personal qualities and appearances is often fleeting once an individual is in office. Once saddled with the responsibilities of a government position, elected officials often discover that popular support wanes, particularly if circumstances force campaign promises to go unfulfilled.

Even when an executive leader enjoys ongoing popular support, this is not automatically translated into the votes necessary for passage of initiatives in the legislature. Therefore, the support provided legislators from the executive's party is often essential for three primary reasons. First, when an executive's fellow party members in

the legislature concur with his policies or decisions, the votes they supply for these initiatives can often be the deciding factor towards its ratification. Second, it is almost always easier for an executive with party support to defend the merits of his positions against opposition parties since he alone does not have to absorb opponents' criticisms and allegations. Finally, with often-inevitable objections emanating from opposition parties, an executive does not need additional criticism from his fellow party members undermining his initiatives. However, in order to achieve and retain party support in the legislature, executive initiatives must usually be consistent with the party's platform. Thus, the executive has incentives to cultivate party support, but what is the likelihood that he or she will be successful?

Two primary reasons exist for legislators to cooperate with an executive from their own party. First, they share policy goals with the executive, codified in their party's ideology and mandate. When legislators find that a fellow party member is the nation's chief executive, this situation offers an ideal opportunity to advance the party program. However, in order to achieve policy gains, party members must cooperate with the executive in order to ensure that party mandates are being pursued.

The second reason for legislators to cooperate with the executive is that when a president is successful in pursuing his policies, his party colleagues in the legislature can benefit during the next election. For example, if an executive was supported by his party colleagues in the legislature and was able to implement his agenda successfully, he will almost always be seen as a leader who can deliver upon his promises. Such an image, with a supporting record to back it up, is invaluable during campaigns not only for the executive, but also for all of the representatives of the party. Therefore, in order to

advance the popularity and support of their party, in addition to having a strong executive campaigning on their behalf, legislators have a clear incentive to protect and promote their party colleagues in the executive branch.

Thus, the executive and legislative representatives of a party have an incentive to cooperate and support the other's initiatives, while simultaneously being wary towards trying to implement policies that party colleagues in both branches do not support. Through establishing mutual co-dependence between the branches of government, parties thus discourage policy initiatives designed for personal gain rather than for the good of the party, or even more importantly, for the good of the entire nation.

In a weakly institutionalized party system, it is often more difficult for the executive and legislative branches to arrive at compromises acceptable to a majority. Instead, it is much easier for many fragmented parties to block executive-initiated bills. Additionally, legislators in a weak party system may be unable to provide the organized support often needed by executive leaders as they pursue their policy initiatives. Eventually because of an uninstitutionalized party system, executive-legislative relations and interdependence atrophy as the executive finds it necessary to operate nearly independently. When this occurs, other government actors such as the judiciary and regional leaders lose influence in the government as power is gradually consolidated in the hands of the executive branch or an individual leader.

C. COMPONENTS OF AN INSTITUTIONALIZED PARTY SYSTEM

The preceding section set forth reasons why institutionalized political parties are critical to democratic development and consolidation. This section describes the main characteristics of an institutionalized party system. Although there is no guarantee that

institutionalized parties will play the roles described in the preceding section, without an institutionalized party system they are practically guaranteed not to fill these roles.

Huntington describes the institutionalization of any political organization as "the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability."[10] An institutionalized party system is a set of patterned interactions in the competition among parties where procedures and organizations are well established, understood, and accepted as critical components of a stable electoral system.

This definition is very similar to the definition of democratic consolidation, discussed earlier in the chapter. Such similarity is appropriate, for the institutionalization of a political party system is a process very similar to, and is an integral aspect of, any successfully consolidating democracy. This relationship exists since an *institutionalized* party system delineates procedures that result in electoral victors who can successfully claim to be the only legitimate leadership of their nation.

In Building Democratic Institutions, Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully argue that four conditions characterize an institutionalized party system: (1) stability in the rules and the nature of interparty competition; (2) major parties have stable roots in society; (3) major political actors accord legitimacy to the electoral process and to the parties; (4) party organizations are independent of individuals' ambitions.[11]

First, a party system is only as stable as its rules and the nature of interparty competition. Informal procedures and political compromises, such as cooperation

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[10] Huntington, 1968, p. 12.

[11] See Mainwaring, 1995, pp. 4-5.

between parties in approving cabinet members and other executive nominations, must be established. An irreconcilable impasse between parties can undermine an entire government. The development of such interactions is different for every nation, but critical nonetheless for stable competition.

By definition, for stable *interparty* relations to exist, there must be more than one relevant party in a country. When a dominant single party excludes all others from effectively sharing in the political process, an institutionalized party system cannot exist. Such dominant parties often become "state makers even to the point of becoming synonymous with the state."[12] For example, during the former 71-year rule of the PRI in Mexico, the nation possessed an *authoritarian democracy* where the PRI "became the electoral wing of the state."[13] Other parties and political organizations are often stifled, and healthy competition breaks down as a single political organization dominates the executive branch, the legislature, and the government bureaucracy.

As it is difficult for stable rules of interparty competition to emerge when a single party dominates, a party system can also be undermined when too many parties exist simultaneously. Each democracy is different, so there is no universal limit as to how many parties should exist in any particular country. Nor is a two party system, as is the case in the United States, necessarily the most suitable structure for any other given country.[14] However, an excess of parties can be said to exist when public support is so

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[12] Lopez-Alves, 2000, p. 7.

[13] Sherman, 2000, pp. 146-147.

[14] For a concise analysis of the benefits and drawbacks of both two-party and multi-party systems, see Lijphart, 1999, pp. 62-64.

widespread between multiple parties that the resultant cacophony of political views makes it extremely difficult to arrive at compromised solutions via the party system. This type of chaotic political environment invites actors to attempt non-democratic bids at attaining power, such as through military coups, since the existing party system is seemingly unable to provide leadership for the nation.

An excess of parties can also undermine the second requirement of an institutionalized party system: the necessity for major parties to establish stable roots in society. Voters need to become familiar with a few enduring parties and know what their general platforms are. If new parties emerge during every election, or if there is a proliferation of parties as is the case in some Latin American countries, the electorate is likely to be unfamiliar with their platforms and ideologies. Under such circumstances, it can be very difficult for citizens to support a party, its platform, or its candidates with confidence. Resultantly, voter turnout can suffer due to frustration and a lack of information, and even many of those that do participate may not make informed decisions. Clearly, for these reasons the endurance of major parties within a nation is a cornerstone of party system stability.

In addition, the conviction with which parties pursue and defend their platforms produces stable roots in society. This is accomplished as stable parties provide the necessary symbolism required by average citizens in order to make informed decisions as to what policies their representatives believe in and support. If existing parties constantly undergo significant position shifts, a stable system no longer exists, as such changes

"imply weak ties between parties and society and an irregularity in how parties compete and relate to social actors."[15]

However, political parties must not be overly static concerning their ideology as they attempt to develop stable roots in society. Parties must be flexible and adapt to social changes by being able to shift gradually their ideological positions in accordance with the demands of the party's members. Only through an accurate portrayal of their constituents' beliefs can parties retain their legitimacy as faithful representatives within the party system. In essence, party leaders must establish equilibrium between being a representative of members' views, while also remaining independent of being overly swayed by such voices to the point where they are unable to adapt to new circumstances.

The third condition for the existence of an institutionalized party system is straightforward, yet its achievement is critical. In order for a party system to be institutionalized, major political actors must accord legitimacy not only to the electoral process, but also to the nation's political parties. In particular, political elites must recognize that "parties are key actors in determining access to power."[16] Clearly, if such actors do not recognize the legitimacy of their nation's parties, there is a greater chance that other means of attaining political office, such as through populist/evangelical mandates, nepotism, or even violence will instead become accepted norms. Such a situation not only undermines the party system, but also can potentially compromise the free and fair execution of the electoral process.

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[15] Mainwaring, 1995, p. 5.

[16] Mainwaring, 1995, p. 5.

Finally, in an institutionalized system, parties are independent organizations that are not subordinate to the selfish interests of overly ambitious party members. Institutionalized parties are dependent upon "their capacity to persist apart from or beyond the political fortunes of a leader who creates and dominates them temporarily."[17] Without such autonomy, individuals would have the ability to influence unduly their party, along with its positions and ideology.[18] The public disgrace of a party representative would lead to the discrediting of the party rather than just the individual. Truly institutionalized parties continue to exist after powerful leaders and supporters leave the political stage. Thus, autonomous party organizations, not elite individuals, ensure the continued institutional integrity of the political party system.

In addition to independence from individuals, institutionalized parties are also autonomous from political movements or other social forces that may have either originally established them or continue to provide support due to shared ideological beliefs. This independence is necessary in order to ensure that parties are allowed to adapt their positions and compromise as required in order to conform to the changing demands of party voters. Political parties must persevere for many years in order to become fully integrated into society, and the only way that parties can survive for extended periods is by being flexible and adapting to inevitable social changes. Such adaptability is not possible if a party is overly dependent upon the support of any other political movement or organization.

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[17] McDonald, 1971, p. viii.

[18] See Alexander, 1973, pp. 4-6, for a short summary of the history and persistence of "personalist" parties in Latin America.

Not only are institutionalized parties independent ideologically from individuals and various political movements, but such parties also have independent financial resources outside the control of other political actors. Such freedom ensures that institutionalized parties are not unduly pressured through financial means to adopt policies they would otherwise not.

Where weak parties exist, elitist rule in the hands of a few, or even a single individual, often prevails. This scenario enables influential individuals, both inside and outside of the government, to manipulate and unduly control the workings of the state.[19] Candidates are more likely to run their campaigns, and citizens are more likely to vote, based upon populist slogans and promises that do not adhere to any developed set of political policies.

Why are such dilemmas present in some nations and not in others? The next section discusses the factors that negatively affect the development of an institutionalized party system.

D. FACTORS INHIBITING THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INSTITUTIONALIZED PARTY SYSTEM

Multiple factors can inhibit the institutionalization of a party system, which in turn hampers democratic consolidation. However, this section will limit its examination to three of the most common inhibiting factors and the effects these have had upon many nations during their struggle to attain democratic consolidation.

This thesis argues that the following three factors inhibit the institutionalization of political party systems:

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[19] See Mainwaring, 1995, p. 478.

1. A lack of organization in society around shared interests such as those generated by religion or economic class;

2. An absence of initial party development during the earliest phases of state building;

3. The behavior of government elites, such as attempts to maintain power through political repression and corrupt practices.

Each of these three factors either directly or indirectly undermines the previous section's four components of an institutionalized party system. For example, existing organizations and shared interests among segments of the population often facilitate the efforts of parties to attain stable roots in society by allowing parties to incorporate easily large segments of society directly into their ranks. Whether such pre-organized parts of society are founded in a common religion, profession, or interest, the preexisting order and structure inherent of social groups allows for the rapid and effective incorporation of these groups into a political party.

Labor unions are a prime example of how existing organizations can be adapted into political parties. In the case of unions, they provide a superb foundation upon which to build disciplined and centralized worker-based political parties.[20] Such working-class parties, often with mass membership, develop because the many industrial laborers within a given nation often have three very important aspects of their lives in common. The first is that they all share very similar political interests, such as safe working

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[20] For an in-depth analysis of how several Latin American party systems have incorporated organized labor into the democratic process, refer to Collier and Collier, 1991, pp. 161-168.

conditions and decent wages. The second aspect is that they are all living and working in close, usually urban quarters, where it is easy for labor party leaders to organize and communicate with their constituents. This fact leads to the third similarity: in many nations, a large majority of skilled workers are in unions, which parallel and in many instances are synonymous with political parties in their purpose. The often-ensured solidarity of union laborers at the voting booth makes their inclusion into political parties a very effective counterforce to aggregated elite interests.

However, when a democratizing nation faces stagnant or non-existent economic development, an organized work force is difficult to develop, and therefore it is extremely difficult to institutionalize either labor unions or working class political parties. In non-industrialized nations where the majority of the working class either is employed through agriculture, involved in menial labor, or is unemployed, labor unions and other organizations within society are not as strong as in an industrialized society. Individuals from lower classes have more dispersed and varying interests, making it more difficult to organize these citizens politically. Thus, the interests of these sectors of society are often neither well aggregated or well represented in the political system. Where labor unions and other organizing bodies do not exist, working class political parties must expend more efforts and resources in establishing some kind of common trend among this class. Furthermore, this situation is more likely to make this segment of society much more vulnerable to populist appeals of charismatic individuals posing as political 'saviors.'

In addition to labor unions and other working class-based organizations, middle class groups might form the basis for the formation of political parties. Members of the middle class often share interests that usually differ from those of the elite, thus providing

an incentive to organize as a party. Furthermore, many Latin American parties based in the middle class often develop support from the unorganized lower classes by making clientelistic appeals. This tactic can be successful if such parties are able to spread their 'pork barrel' promises and convince the masses that they can deliver on their promises.[21] In addition, middle class-based parties can also attain lower class support via non-class ideological grounds, such as nationalism, religion, or a host of other issues. In either case, a politically active middle class increases the chances that non-elite parties will form and serve as a central channel for representation of interests.

Unfortunately, when modern economic development stalls or never begins, a bipolar distribution of wealth occurs. Specifically, a great deal of wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few, while the percentage of impoverished citizens increases. Often, the result is the dissolving of the middle class, as all except for a few elite are unable to maintain their economic positions in society.

Furthermore, without a developed economic sector, a nation's political structure will also tend to be weak since poor national economic performance eventually tarnishes a government's legitimacy. Regardless of whether or not a nation's financial straits are the result of government mismanagement, if a nation experiences continued economic depression, the government's ability to lead will increasingly be called into question. In such an environment, political parties will frequently come to power and then lose support as a result of their inability to govern. Such was the case of Peru in the 1980's, where the inability of Presidents Fernando Belaunde and Alan Garcia to solve the

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[21] See Dix, 1989, pp. 26-27 for a further examination and previous examples of this trend in Latin American.

nation's increasing economic difficulties were key factors that undermined popular support for both of their parties. In turn, this loss of confidence in these major parties undermined the entire party system, encouraging Peruvians to look outside of existing institutions and instead to the 'savior' of the authoritarian Alberto Fujimori.[22]

In the case of the second factor undermining party institutionalization, if a political party system is not in place during the initial state building process, the bureaucracy will tend to usurp the mediating role between state and society that parties usually play. In contrast, if parties emerge as principal agents of interest aggregation and representation before major state expansion, actors are likely to pursue their objectives through parties.[23] The longer that a bureaucracy is operational without a significant party presence, it will become increasingly more difficult for parties to develop and for a system to institutionalize. This dilemma will usually occur since actors become used to fulfilling their interests through direct appeals to the state apparatus, such as the executive and military bureaucracies, instead of through either parties or the legislature.

Furthermore, when parties do emerge, they will more likely be oriented toward clientelistic politics since they can rely on state resources rather than their own organizational efforts to gain votes. An example of this practice would be the distribution of state resources to constituents in order to remain in power instead of having to organize support based on policies. Such a situation leads to increased corruption, a lack of representative political parties, and a barrier to democratic consolidation.

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[22] See Roberts, 1998, p. 203.

[23] See Daalder, 1996, pp. 58-64 for further analysis of this theory.

Finally, behavior of government elites such as political repression and corruption is the third and final factor that can inhibit party system institutionalization.[24] Often, when a nation is trying to transition to democracy, the entrenched elite can be unwilling to surrender their political power and will act to prevent its loss. Sometimes the only way in which an undemocratic regime can retain power is through political repression, accentuated with threats, violence, and the outlawing of opposition parties.

Such actions directly result in the lack of an institutionalized party system by destroying the faith a nation's population has in the ability of the democratic system to represent and defend the lives of non-elites. It is very difficult for individuals living in fear of their own government to believe that non-violent political actions can have any effect. In addition, it is difficult for parties to organize and share different political ideas, when anyone engaging in such activity is met with violence originating from the ruling regime. Parties go either "underground" or go into exile; neither is conducive to developing stable roots in society. Many political parties are unable to survive in such an environment, and when such repression is at last ended in a society, they are often unable to organize citizens and aggregate their interests as the transition to democracy begins.

Corruption originating from a nation's elite can also inhibit the institutionalization of the party system. When an opposing representative is bribed to switch parties by entrenched elites or blackmailed in order to further the interests of a powerful few, both the individual's party and his constituents are betrayed. The loss of public trust in such an official and his party can seriously jeopardize the legitimacy of the entire party system.

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[24] For an examination of 'Elitism' as an enduring trend in Latin American political parties, see McDonald, 1971, p. 8.

Inversely, elite actors can also have a positive and immediate effect on party system institutionalization. While it is impossible to change a nation's history, and levels of societal organization can take years and sometimes decades to change, elite behavior can sometimes be modified rather quickly, resulting in near-instantaneous improvements to the system. The most important of these efforts is the most straightforward: elites must be willing to surrender their personal power to institutionalized parties. As argued by Mainwaring and Scully, such action is *sine qua non* if democratic consolidation is to proceed and an institutionalized party system is to survive. In order to assist further in their development, however, elites can take positive action by publicly supporting the party system and becoming leaders within a party themselves.

The following chapter examines Haiti's political system prior to the most recent installation of democracy in 1994 and shows how personalized, absolute rule, supported by violent political oppression, has undermined significant party system institutionalization in Haiti.

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III. HAITIAN PARTY SYSTEM BEFORE 1994 INTERVENTION

*For a variety of internal and external reasons far too complex to address
here, Haiti did not fare well over the last 200 years*

From <u>Haiti Handbook for US Personnel</u>[25]

A. HISTORICAL SITUATION

Haitians have almost always been dominated by leaders who govern by brutal oppression. Just as their European masters oppressed the slaves of colonial Haiti, this nation's citizens would not be truly free even after their independence. The twentieth century did not improve matters for Haiti, for whether it was a twenty-year U.S. occupation or an even longer period of violence under the Duvalier regime, Haiti seemed destined to live under authoritarian rule. However, in 1986 the Duvaliers fled, followed by chaotic yet optimistic increases in political freedom. Finally, in 1990, after almost two centuries of near-continuous oppression, Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected President.

Many factors, both foreign and domestic, have strangled democratic ideals and hindered the development of democracy in Haiti. This chapter examines the historical factors that have undermined the development of an institutionalized party system in Haiti. It concludes by showing how the weakness of political parties contributed to the rise and subsequent fall of President Aristide and the collapse of what had been a promising step towards consolidated democracy.

1. Early Haitian History

Haitian independence, like that of many Latin American nations, was the product of a bloody and chaotic rebellion against an imperial European power. From 1790-1804, armed conflict against French and other European forces, along with political and cultural

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[25] von Hippel, 2000, p. 96.

tensions among blacks, whites, and mulattos, beset the island of Hispaniola. Although Haiti eventually became an independent state in 1804, political and economic chaos remained nearly constant until the early twentieth century. As Smith argues, this turmoil was the result of,

> Crosscutting cleavages and dichotomies that divided the Haitian people and undermined national unity. Class antagonisms were reflected in the divisions between French-speaking and Kreyol [Creole]-speaking populations, black and mulatto color distinctions, Roman Catholic and Vodun [Voodoo] religious groups and power struggles.[26]

Although Haitians had rid themselves of colonialism, they were not able to escape oppression. Haiti's new leaders exploited their positions and turned the hemisphere's richest colony into the poorest country as continuous civil wars and brutal dictatorships devastated the nation. Unlike in post-revolutionary France, democratic ideals never took hold in Haiti. Instead, during the nation's early history, "politics were dominated by the numerically small elite, and by a succession of military strongmen who controlled the presidency."[27]

The military involvement in Haiti's political system initially developed out of an immediate sense of national security. Fearing French military retribution, the newly independent nation's initial concern was defending against an invading force bent on retaking the colony. The military leaders of the revolution constructed numerous fortifications along the Haitian coasts while retaining political power in order to defend the nation against a possible invasion. In 1805, an imperial constitution consecrated military control over the government, as the perceived necessity of living under a

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[26] Bellegarde-Smith, 1990, p. 70.

[27] Schmidt, 1971, p. 26.

militaristic rule forestalled any development of ideals. The merging of the military and the government would last until 1913 and would foreshadow nearly two centuries of militarism in Haiti.

The necessity for the various military governments to control the vast numbers of recently freed slaves was another factor that accounted for the embracing of an authoritarian regime early in Haiti's history. For although the ruling class, freed slaves, and slaves themselves had banded together to fight a common enemy during the revolution, the elite intended to maintain strict control over the former slaves following independence. In order to maintain political and economic control over the masses, a strong, centralized government based in Port-au-Prince developed.

Simultaneously, a system of feudalistic *caudillismo* developed throughout the countryside, where former slave owners and military officers assumed the responsibility of overseeing their workers in arrangements similar to the old slavery system. In short, Haitian governments have historically maintained their power and have enriched themselves by taking advantage of the poor peasants. Resultantly, "Haiti's rural areas, where the majority of the population lives, traditionally has benefited least from government expenditures, and they have suffered for the past 500 years from virtually uninterrupted military domination."[28] In such a situation, where the elite rulers were primarily mulattos, and the poor were almost entirely black, racial tensions concurrent with class divisions arose. In essence, little had changed for the majority of Haitians; their political freedoms in the post-independence period were only marginally improved over the total lack of liberties that marked the colonial slavery system.

Civilian involvement in the Haitian government began in earnest during the mid-nineteenth century as international merchants began to enter Haiti. By the late nineteenth early twentieth centuries, foreigners, especially from the United States, Europe, and the Middle East, comprised over half of all businessmen in Haiti. They were especially involved in the critical fields of banking and import-export shipping. Resultantly, an increasing number of upper and middle-class Haitians were chased from their jobs and forced to make a living in "the lucrative field of politics." This profession was not lucrative due to high salaries; instead, political office offered the opportunity for self-enrichment through corrupt practices.[29]

By the 1880's, this influx of Haitians into politics resulted in the emergence of the first political parties, the Liberal and National parties. Although this step was critical for democratic development, both parties were very similar in their representations of upper class, hegemonic interests. Despite their frequent and violent confrontations, these two parties' represented only slightly different elitist viewpoints. While this was typical of initial party systems in many Latin American nations, elitist parties in other countries eventually incorporated the lower classes directly or permitted parties that did so. This did not occur in Haiti, as the parties ignored the increasingly outspoken demands of many poor Haitians.

Instead, what happened by the end of the nineteenth-century in Haiti was "the opposite of a social contract. The reaction of the urban elites to the rise of the peasantry was to turn away from anything that would resemble a package of entitlements for the

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[28] Library of Congress, *Haiti,* pp. 1-2.

[29] See Bellegarde-Smith, 1990, p. 67.

majority. Rather, the choice was to turn to a system of social apartheid."[30] Resultantly, an almost total lack of institutionalization occurred as the vast majority of political interests were not represented in, nor benefited from, this party system. By the time the U.S. Marines landed in 1915, the elites and those working within the government had learned to "live only at the expense of the nation."[31]

2. U.S. Occupation, 1915-1934

Haiti did not enjoy a stable government until 1915 when the United States dispatched Marines to establish a constabulary government. Such action was not unprecedented; U.S. troops had intervened in Haiti during the last half of the nineteenth century on nineteen separate occasions. The immediate causes of the occupation were both economic disputes: the first was between the Haitian *Banque Nationale* and the New York National City Bank, the second was between the Haitian government and the U.S.-owned Haitian National Railroad. The United States would achieve its goals by effectively taking over the *Banque Nationale* and forcing Haiti to pay enormous costs for National Railroad projects, while simultaneously establishing a puppet government that was pliant to these and other demands.[32]

However, increased government repression was the required price for political and economic stability. During the occupation, Washington and its proxy government in Port-au-Prince controlled the Haitian people via the state bureaucracy and stymied the development of democratic participation in the political system. For example, the Haitian

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[30] Trouillot, 1997, p. 52.

[31] Trouillot, 1997, p. 52.

[32] See Schmidt, 1971, Ch. 3, for a more thorough review of this period.

legislature was dissolved when it would not adopt a constitution drafted by the U.S. Department of State (DoS). Inevitably, the U.S.-controlled government accepted policies that allowed foreign investors to become rich at the expense of the poor, rural Haitians.[33]

Because of the continued U.S. presence, a heretofore-unseen nationalist movement arose. In order to silence these opponents, the Haitian government often used its U.S.-trained and supported military. Even after the Marines left in 1934, the empowered elite continued repressive practices, lest the increasingly disproportionate poor rise in revolution as their ancestors had in the late eighteenth century. Such actions only intensified already existing divisions between the classes.

During the occupation, Haitian politicians further deluded themselves that their positions were legitimate offices and not avenues of self-enrichment. The rich were also able to rationalize their corruption by asserting they were the descendents of the pre-revolutionary Creole elite and therefore had a predestined right to rule and exploit the masses. The middle class intelligentsia, on the other hand, saw themselves as the vanguard of the black working class. However, once in office, many such officials focused exclusively on maintaining their positions for as long as possible and quickly forgot about the plight of their impoverished constituents.[34] Such corrupt attitudes still exist, and overcoming this dilemma will require time and extensive effort on the part of all Haitians and any outsiders who would assist them.

In 1934, U.S. forces pulled out of Haiti and Washington returned control of the *Banque Nationale* to the Haitian government. Nonetheless, during their two decades of

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[33] See Rotberg, 1971, Ch. 4.

[34] See Rotberg, 1971, pp. 147-148.

occupation the Marines had successfully crushed a series of bloody insurgencies and had forced U.S. policies upon the Haitian government. Additionally, the United States overhauled Haiti's "disintegrating military infrastructure in an attempt to establish a modern, apolitical military force."[35] Although on the surface the U.S. military had succeeded, what they did not know was that this newly disciplined and modernized army would be used by the following regimes to oppress domestic political opponents.

3.   Post-Occupation Years and the Duvalier Regimes
After the U.S. departure, Haiti experienced eleven years of repression-based political stability via military regimes. Some political organizers attempted to define and institutionalize the incipient left-wing political parties, such as the Worker-Peasant Movement (MOP) and other Socialist and Communist parties. However, the elite "controlled the government and stymied the development of democratic participation in the political process. As in other countries where the United States intervened, power was increasingly concentrated in the executive branch and the army."[36] Resultantly, conservative, elite-oriented interests successfully ruled the political system as the government "utilized its U.S.-sponsored army to stifle all dissent and further centralized political and economic power in Port-au-Prince at the expense of the provinces."[37]

Authoritarian regimes maintained an elite-centered status quo until 1946, when a military coup brought President Dumarsais Estime to power. As a rural black, Estime "did not maintain the elite control the U.S. occupation was supposed to ensure and

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[35] Fauriol, "Military," p. 16.

[36] Bellegarde-Smith, 1990, p. 86.

[37] Bellegarde-Smith, 1990, p. 86.

[instead…] tried to reconcile color and class antagonisms from an earlier age."[38] Estime legalized left-wing parties, as his regime marked one of the most progressive periods in Haitian politics. However, he would eventually cave into U.S. anti-leftist pressures and ban socialist parties along with establishing strict control over unions and student organizations. When Estime fell out of favor with virtually every sector of Haitian society, as well as losing U.S. support, he was exiled via a military coup.

President Paul-Eugene Magloire, a leading general of the junta and an elite black, replaced Estime in 1950. Magloire ruled Haiti for six years and maintained a quiet, elitist status quo. He attempted to extend his six-year presidency, however, and was driven out of office and forced into exile by the same army that he had led in the previous coup. Despite his relatively calm tenure, upon his departure from office Haiti experienced a level of political chaos not seen since before the U.S. occupation. During the 1956-1957 period after Magloire's exile, Haiti experiencing five governments within six months. One leader, MOP President Daniel Fignole, lasted only nineteen days before a military junta deposed him. Three days later, troops and police massacred approximately one thousand protesting Fignole supporters.[39]

Clearly, this situation drastically damaged the legitimacy of the Haitian political system. Fortunately, however, the political system eventually stabilized to the point necessary for the scheduling of September 1957 presidential elections. This tumultuous period was very similar to the years immediately before the 1915 intervention, and in similar fashion, the United States became involved. The U.S. felt that Haiti needed a

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[38] Bellegarde-Smith, 1990, p. 90.

[39] See Diederich, 1969, p. 94.

middle-class, middle-of-the-road reformer, and of all the candidates, Dr. Francois 'Papa Doc' Duvalier, a country physician, was perceived as the best choice.[40]

Duvalier, a middle-class black and a cabinet minister under the progressive Estime regime, had the support of nearly every sector of the Haitian political spectrum, including the poor masses, the intelligentsia, and most of the army officer corps. Most importantly, however, was the support of the United States: the State Department, the Agency for International Development (AID), and other U.S. actors both overtly and covertly supported his campaign efforts.

Duvalier won the 1957 democratic election under suspicious circumstances, but the majority of Haitians greeted him as the legitimately elected president, glad simply to have what appeared to be a stable, liberal leader. However, Duvalier's non-democratic actions, beginning approximately six months after his election, dispelled any hope for a stable democracy as he quickly asserted himself as one of the most ruthless dictators in Latin American history. As stated on the official website of Haiti's U.S. Embassy, "The corrupt Duvalier dictatorship marks one of the saddest chapters in Haitian history with tens of thousands killed or exiled."[41]

Haiti's modern political history begins with 'Papa Doc,' since it is during his reign that all political opposition was crushed through violent intimidation, in effect wiping the democratic slate clean. As explained by one correspondent, the *Tonton Macoutes* were the regime's notorious private army that accomplished this feat. Blessed with Duvalier's fearful, near-supernatural personal power, these assassins were voodoo-

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[40] See Rotberg, 1971, pp. 195-196.

[41] Embassy, 2001, p. 3.

linked authorities who maliciously crushed political dissidents and opposition figures, instilling fear into all Haitians towards them and the entire Duvalier regime.[42]

In 1964, Duvalier declared himself 'President-for-Life', and would retain this post until his death in April 1971. Duvalier was replaced by his son and personally designated successor, 19-year-old Jean-Claude 'Baby Doc' Duvalier, who would continue the reign of political oppression and terror until 1986. In all, an estimated 20,000 to 50,000 Haitians were murdered during the combined Duvalier era.

The role of modern Haitian political parties begins during 'Baby Doc's' reign. By the time the junior Duvalier took office, his father had seen to the thorough decimation of any foundations for an institutionalized party system. In its place was a clan of ruthless thugs of diverse social backgrounds whose only shared ideology was an indomitable allegiance to the Duvalier family and their own pocketbooks.[43]

However, the ruthlessly violent measures of 'Papa Doc's' regime were significantly more restrained under his son's reign. By the late 1970's and early 1980's, political opposition was becoming more organized and 'Baby Doc' began to acquiesce to domestic and international pressures for a more liberalized political system. It was during this period that there was a resurgence in opposition parties, as approximately a dozen such parties were waiting in exile and hoping for the Duvalier regime to either be overthrown or institute meaningful democratic reforms.[44]

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[42] See von Hippel, 2000, p. 97.

[43] See Heinl, 1978, p. 596.

[44] These parties were forced into exile through political repression; it was obviously difficult for parties to develop stable roots in society if they were not even in Haiti. See Library of Congress, *Political*, p. 1, for further information on these parties.

In February 1979, elections were held for the National Assembly. The official government party, Parti de l'Unite Nationale, won 57 of the 58 seats. In 1983, allegations of electoral fraud and the obstruction of opposition parties tainted the first municipal elections in 25 years. In 1984, opposition candidates were not allowed to contest the National Assembly elections and another dubious vote return overwhelming benefitted the ruling regime.

Nonetheless, by April of the following year it appeared that Duvalier was allowing for a slight liberalization of the political system as he announced his plans for constitutional reforms. Perhaps the most important announced reform was the legalization and incorporation of political parties into the national political system. However, Duvalier's 'liberal' reforms were Constitutional amendments that were approved via a fraudulent referendum that among other things provided for "severe restrictions on the registration of political parties."[45] These restrictions were such that only if a party's views conformed to the ruling regime would it be allowed to register. Consequently, the government allowed only one party, the Duvalierist National Progressive Party (PNP), to register.

Limited reforms were not sufficient to calm the protests of many opposition movements, which demanded immediate changes. Due to the continued oppression of political parties, these organizations had a small role in this popular mobilization. Instead, religious organizations were the primary leaders of the protests. Ever since a massive government crackdown in 1980, "the Church was the only institution left with any built-in immunity to State power and became a natural umbrella for all dissent…. Churches

were the only place that political gatherings could be held with impunity."[46] Resultantly, religious leaders acquired great political influence as many Haitians looked to such individuals for leadership and representation of their interests.

No other religious leader acquired a stronger following than Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide did. Aristide studied abroad and embraced liberation theology as a young man. He returned to Haiti and survived several assassination attempts while openly opposing the Duvalier regime and subsequent dictatorships, achieving a nationwide following as radio addresses transmitted his anti-government rhetoric. He often quoted bible passages that called for the poor to defend themselves while simultaneously eyeing the developed world as an exploiting force that had unfairly subjugated Haiti. The mostly illiterate slum dwellers and peasants of Haiti have always rallied to him as he often led them in protests and strikes against the military regimes. Ultimately, Aristide would become the personal standard-bearer for a social movement that was not yet institutionalized within the context of a political party.

Although Church-led anti-Duvalier movements had been gaining momentum for several years, beginning in November 1985 massive nonviolent uprisings spread throughout the country after government forces killed four schoolchildren while dispersing a demonstration. In response to these large protests, Duvalier imposed a state of siege and declared martial law, closing the university and censoring radio broadcasts.[47]

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[45] Library of Congress, *Background*, p. 2.

[46] Chamberlain, 1995, p. 17.

[47] Library of Congress, *Jean-Claude Duvalier*, p. 1.

Such actions had little impact, however. Duvalier eventually lost the support of the officer corps and, most critically, the United States. On February 7, 1986, Jean-Claude Duvalier and his family fled aboard a U.S. Air Force jet en route to exile in France. Although the Duvalier era was over, authoritarian oppression would continue to spoil democratic initiatives in Haiti. In the ten years following Duvalier's exile, Haiti would experience political violence and chaos, including nine presidential elections.[48]

4.   Political Environment from 1986 –1990

Immediately before the Duvaliers fled Haiti, General Henry Namphy assumed national leadership as the head of five-member National Council of Government (CNG). Although the new regime provided no support for the electoral process, democratic initiatives were pursued by various Haitian elements. Political oppression, although still present, would never be as widespread as during the Duvalier regime. Resultantly, democratic parties began to organize themselves in increasing numbers. However, the overall role of parties from 1986-1990 was limited, since although they were able to become better organized, it was instead influential individuals such as Aristide who led popular protests that eventually forced the holding of democratic elections.

One party that developed during this period was the socialist National Congress of Haitian Democracy, led by Victor Benoit. Like nearly all of the political reformers of this period, he called for the uprooting of the elite. Another such party was the former protest movement named The National Front for Change and Democracy (FNCD). The FNCD

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[48] Pastor, 1997, pp. 118-119.

was a political coalition that included "workers and peasants but also members from the old merchant class who disliked the new manufacturing interests."[49]

Soon, it appeared that these and other parties had seemingly gained increased political power as their leaders led a popular revolt named *operation dechoukaj* (Creole for *operation uprooting*). These leaders led a national crusade comprised of strikes and mass demonstrations in which they "sought to destroy the foundations of Duvalierism."[50] This uprising often became violent, leading to riots and the murder of scores of *Tonton Macoutes* and other Duvalier supporters. However, the ultimate result of this movement came about in March 1987, when the Haitian population overwhelmingly approved a new Constitution in a referendum held by the government. This new Constitution reflected the anti-Duvalierist national sentiment by disallowing any Duvalier-supporting party candidate from running for political office.

During the summer of 1987, Haiti witnessed enormous street demonstrations clamoring for the implementation of democratic reforms promised by the new Constitution. Opposition leaders, including Aristide, were "involved in helping to organize demonstrations and protests," many of which resulted in the murder of protestors by the government in an effort to maintain its centralized power.[51] Nonetheless, the protest movement was effective, as the government scheduled presidential elections for November of that year. Political parties responded enthusiastically, as thirty-five candidates registered, and all but twelve Duvalierists were

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[49] Brune, 1998, p. 44.

[50] Library of Congress, *Background*, p. 2.

[51] Aristide, 1990, xiii.

allowed on the ballot. Although two candidates were assassinated, by election day seventy-three percent of all eligible voters had registered.

On November 29, elections were held as scheduled and voter turnout was heavy, but the polls were closed within hours of opening as the FADH (Forces Armees d'Haiti) and *Tonton Macoutes* murdered thirty-four voters. Two months later, military controlled elections were held but were widely boycotted by the population, with only approximately five percent of the population voting. Based upon the dubious results of this flawed election, the military proclaimed Leslie Manigat the victor, and he soon became a puppet of those officers who temporarily held power in Haiti. Following the aborted elections and under the Manigat regime, U.S. observers found political parties "demoralized."[52] Instability continued as two separate military coups soon overturned the outcome of the Manigat election. Within four months of his placement into power, General Namphy seized national leadership, only to be ousted by General Prosper Avril on September 17, 1988.[53]

Avril installed a largely civilian government, but in truth, the army was still in control. Nonetheless, Avril seemed committed to reestablishing democracy, and in February 1989, he convened an Electoral Council Forum in which he was willing to "accept any reasonable proposals the forum might recommend." The meetings had an optimistic start as a "cross-section of leading opposition figures, representing 28 political parties and opposition groups, including several from both the extreme left and right of

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[52] U.S. House, 1989, p. 38.

[53] Fauriol, "Military," p. 19.

the Haitian political spectrum attended."[54] Two weeks following its initiation, Avril accepted the Forum's recommendations and issued a decree reestablishing the Electoral Council, much to the satisfaction of many opposition parties who were willing to work with the government and were seeking new elections.

However, parties of both the extreme left and right were unwilling to support the decree. As Richard Melton, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs testified, "Both the extreme left and the right remain opposed to reforms. In paradoxical fashion, these two political extremes share an objective: to exploit the relative weakness of Avril's government and the dismal economic situation in Haiti to forestall reform. 'The worse, the better' seems to be their motto."[55] Some far left parties, such as KID (Democratic Unity Confederation), refused to acknowledge Avril's legitimacy as the nation's leader, and were unwilling to negotiate with what they saw as an illegal regime.

Eventually, however, the army acted in the autumn of 1989 before Avril and party leaders were able to reach an agreement. A series of military-led killings and brutalities, including the torture of three leftist leaders, sparked demonstrations and strikes that led to social chaos. However, opposition parties, which remained disorganized and unable to rally the populace, were not the force behind these uprisings. Instead, non-political and often religious figures were responsible for mobilizing their followers against the government. Perhaps no one had a greater impact than Aristide, who established a popular movement of pro-democrtaic, grassroots organizations and individual followers. He dubbed this movement *Lavalas*, Creole for 'flash flood,' and through this movement

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[54] U.S. House, 1989, p. 6.

[55] U.S. House, 1989, p. 13.

Aristide would become the most well known and influential of all social leaders, although he was not associated with any political party.[56]

In a desperate attempt to maintain order, Avril ordered widespread repression against opposition parties, students, and democratic organizations.[57] Avril eventually resigned on March 10, 1990 in the face of protests, general strikes, and pressure from U.S. Ambassador Alvin Adams. Following Avril's ouster, the moderate General Herard Abraham assumed the role of army chief of staff and he immediately accepted the formation of a Provisional Government headed by Supreme Court Justice Ertha Pascal Trouillot. Her primary goal was to organize democratic elections as soon as possible; within a year, both presidential and general elections would be held in Haiti.[58]

B.   THE RISE OF FATHER JEAN-BERTRAND ARISTIDE

The December 1990 presidential election was the only one of the nine since the end of the Duvalier regime that all parties acknowledged as free and fair. In a stunning upset on December 16, 1990, Aristide received 67.5% of the popular vote, defeating his closest competitor, the "U.S. Favorite," Marc Bazin, who received a mere 14.2% of all ballots.[59] A lack of institutionalized parties was the primary reason behind Aristide's success. While dozens of fragmented and disorganized parties existed in 1990, none had a solid base of support within the electorate. Resultantly, populist-supported personalities such as Aristide became viable candidates for high offices.

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[56] Gibbons, 1999, p. 2.

[57] Chamberlain, 1995, p. 38.

[58] See Schanche, 1990, p. 12.

[59] See Embassy, 2001, p. 5.

During the election campaign, many Haitians were unable to identify with particular party mandates and ideologies. In response, the FNCD chose Aristide as their presidential candidate due to his personal appeal, charisma, and evangelical message.[60] The organizers of this party knew they needed a candidate who appealed to the masses and, if possible, already had a nation-wide following. Without such personal appeal, a candidate campaigning primarily on his party's platform would have little chance.

Ultimately, Aristide would benefit from the lack of an institutionalized party system and win the December election by a landslide. The following month, however, the outcome of the election was placed in jeopardy as a coup attempt materialized. Roger Lafontant, a former Interior Minister during the Duvalier regime and head of the *Tonton Macoutes*, led a coup even before Aristide could be sworn into office. However, after Aristide supporters rioted in the streets and stormed the Presidential Palace, forces loyal to the government arrested Lafontant and the coup attempt was struck down. Such an occurrence foreshadowed how Aristide would have to depend upon the easily excitable members of his political congregation in order to remain in office. The direct link that he had made with his followers would provide the only support he would be able to rely upon after he was sworn in as president.

C.   THE 1991 ARISTIDE ADMINISTRATION

Aristide's presidency granted the Haitian people the greatest political freedom they had known since before the Duvalier regime. This reprise from oppression would be

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[60] By recruiting Aristide, Lavalas was also represented on the FNCD ticket.

short-lived, however, since seven months after Aristide's inauguration, a military coup overthrew the president, establishing General Raoul Cedras as the leader of Haiti. Via the presidential election, Aristide's Lavalas movement had captured a solid majority of the nation's population through the support of the poor, in itself a clear victory for democratic ideals. Why then did such a promising government and democratic movement with the support of two-thirds of the voting population end so quickly?

1.   Impact of Weak Party Institutionalization on Aristide Government

While there are many factors that contributed to the eventual ouster of Aristide, a primary reason is that in 1990 and 1991, no institutionalized party system existed throughout the nation's body politic. In particular, the lack of an institutionalized party system undermined Aristide's relationship with his potential supporters in the legislature at the same time that he chose to rely upon his support base in society. Due partially to this latter factor, Aristide in turn found it difficult to have an effective working relationship with his opposition.

a.   *Support Base in Legislature*

As shown in the previous chapter, political parties can promote strong relations between the legislative and executive branches of government. However, this benefit cannot be attained if the executive leader sharply deviates from his party platform. Such was the situation between Aristide and the FNCD, as Aristide, even before he was elected, never intended to pursue or defend his party's platform. In reality, Aristide was never a true representative of his party; he only used the FNCD as a party name upon which to register into the election. In fact, the party's leadership secured Aristide's cooperation by promising that if he won the election, they would work in conjunction with Lavalas in achieving Aristide's reform objectives.

Resultantly, after his inauguration Aristide did not incorporate the ideas or opinions of his fellow party members in the legislature as he attempted to make policy and enact initiatives in a near-authoritarian manner. As Aristide become more adamant and inflexible in pursuing his policy initiatives, he soon alienated many within and outside of Haiti, causing tensions to mount throughout the entire Haitian political system.

Why did Aristide discount the importance of the legislature? Clearly, he could not afford to squander any support in this branch, since the FNCD did not have a majority in either the Senate or the Chamber of Deputies. Most likely, it was Aristide's overwhelming percentage of votes in the presidential election compared to the 36% of legislative seats held by the FNCD.[61] He must have realized that since his party did not have a majority in both houses, in order to pass initiatives into law he would have to compromise with his opposition.[62] However, Aristide felt that with so many Haitians personally supporting him, he would not be serving their interests if he compromised on his campaign promises. Ultimately, frustrated by his inability to enact his reforms due to a lack of legislative support, one of Aristide's costliest errors was,

> Marginalizing, then antagonizing, and eventually attacking, his own political party and its followers within the legislature. It was this behavior that best reveals not only Aristide's modus operandi but indeed how soon and completely he had picked up the very conventional Haitian emphasis on the presidency as the only significant office.[63]

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[61] See Brune, 1998, p. 44.

[62] See Maingot, 1996, 202.

[63] Maingot, 1996, p. 202.

However, the Haitian legislature was no longer willing to accept this tradition. The FNCD representatives in this branch were insulted when Aristide did not involve or even informally consult with them as he made policy and pursued his own personal agenda. Since he was unwilling to commit to the party mandate of the FNCD, or even compromise his personal convictions, his fellow party members in the legislature in turn denounced their party's commitment to him and did not support him.

b.   Support Base in Society

Without a party to support him, Aristide's only viable source of political support was the socially-based Lavalas movement. However, Aristide soon learned that this organization, which had no legislative representatives, was no substitute for a supporting political party. With Lavalas, he could not rely upon party support in the legislature, no matter how many millions of Haitians agreed with his particular agenda or provided him with popular support.

Additionally, many Haitians saw Aristide as a messianic figure that transcended politics, one that could personally assist and lead the impoverished. This religious aspect of Aristide's persona, the force which propelled him into the Presidential Palace, also defined and ultimately restricted his ability to govern as it became as much of a curse as a blessing.[64]

In order to maintain the image upon which he depended, Aristide continued to present himself as a religious figure. His fiery rhetoric served him well both as a populist priest and as a candidate. As president, in an effort to maintain his popularity with his supporters, he continued to employ verbose and inflammatory

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[64] See Maingot, 1996, pp. 200-203.

proclamations. These actions undermined his appeal among the more educated and less impressionable elements of Haitian society. On September 27, 1991, Aristide offered a particularly graphic speech in which he alluded to the benefit of "necklacing," or the placement of burning tires, around the necks of his political opponents.[65] Whether this proclamation was a direct cause or not, the coup that would end his presidency occurred a mere three days after this statement was made.

Aristide also aimed his economic policies at maintaining his popularity with his followers with little regard as to how these policies would affect the bourgeoise and the upper classes. Aristide attempted to mitigate and correct Haiti's many economic problems by personally seeking support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. He attempted to initiate new public works projects, make the wealthy pay an increased percentage of taxes, impose levies on factory operators, support the growth of trade unions, and raise the minimum wage from $3 to $5 a day. These and other initiatives greatly angered Haitian elites to the point that they labeled Aristide a "Bolshevik" and "the devil."[66]

In an attempt to reallocate funds rapidly to the poor and maintain their support, Aristide requested in an "intemperate and threatening" manner that "the 'monied classes' contribute millions of dollars to the state." Not only was such coercion illegal, but he also only gave these individuals four days to comply. Such actions reminded some of the Duvaliers' notorious 'voluntary contributions' campaigns.[67]

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[65] See McFadyen, 1995, pp. 176-177.

[66] Morley, 1997, p. 364.

[67] Maingot, 1996, p. 202.

### c.	*Relationship with Opposition*

Due to the minority position of the FNCD in parliament and Aristide's uncompromising initiatives, he had to contend with an opposition-controlled legislature. The lack of a majority in both chambers would soon be a major obstacle for Aristide, as he would have to "negotiate with opposition parties over the choice of a prime minister and other policy matters."[68] Francois Benoit, the vice president of the National Alliance, an alliance of center-right and socialist politicians, stated that if Aristide expected to govern effectively, "an intense period of coalition building" between the FNCD and its opponents would be required.[69]

However, no such coalitions were established for two reasons. First, Aristide was unwilling to compromise. Second, even if Aristide had tried to reach a working agreement with right-wing opposition parties, such a feat would have been extremely difficult. This was the case since there was no single party with which to compromise; instead, there were many small, fragmented parties. Each organization represented a very small section of society, and it would have been nearly impossible to reach a consensus on major issues with so many positions weighing into the balance.

Nonetheless, the legislative representatives of the elite, although still divided into many small, disparate parties, were able to organize sufficiently against Aristide; almost all of the opposition parties shared a common bond in rejecting Aristide's initiatives. Resultantly, nearly all of Aristide's initiatives were "blocked by parliament, which still consisted largely of representatives of traditional political

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[68] French, 1991, p. A5.

[69] French, 1991, p. A5.

organizations and not Lavalas activists."[70] After the September coup, Aristide proclaimed that one of his most critical mistakes was that "he showed too little respect for the independence of the parliament."[71]

2. The Collapse of Democracy and the Cedras Regime

In a democracy, every sector of society must feel they are able to influence government through established democratic means. When Aristide lashed out at nearly every political party, including the FNCD, such actions made the effective operation of a party system impossible, which in turn made democratic consolidation elusive.

Although compromises would not have given Aristide the absolute victories he had wanted, he should have realized that in a democracy, the executive can legitimately govern strictly by decree only under the most dire emergencies and then only temporarily. While the various party representatives in a democracy's legislative branch may not always possess commensurate powers as the executive, ambitious executive leaders must not discount their interests and often-implacable political power.

If an institutionalized party system had existed, Aristide's party or a coalition of allied parties might have had a majority in Congress. Alternatively, if no majority existed, Aristide might have achieved compromises with his opponents, thus allowing initiatives to become beneficial laws. Such a development might have assuaged the fears of the elite, including the military, and the eventual coup might have been avoided.

Ultimately, however, it became apparent that those who continued to subscribe to the violent historical nature of Haitian politics did not yet acknowledge that democracy

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[70] Kumar, 1991, p. 20.

[71] Pastor, 1997, p. 121.

was the only legitimate path to governmental power. No longer did all actors see this system of government as "the only game in town." Three days after the infamous "necklacing" speech, Aristide barely escaped Haiti alive after a military coup removed him from the Presidential Palace on September 30. The newly born, yet non-institutionalized, Haitian democracy had lasted only nine months.

In October 1991, the army appointed Joseph Nerette as interim President and Jean Jacques Honorat as Prime Minister, although the true control of the government remained with Cedras and the military. Despite international condemnation, all immediate efforts to reinstate Aristide were unsuccessful. Instead, Nerette's term of office was extended indefinitely, and in June 1992, Marc Bazin, who was legitimately defeated by Aristide in the 1990 presidential election, was made Prime Minister.

The Cedras regime threw Haiti back into political repression and violence akin to the days of "Papa Doc" Duvalier. It would take three years, two U.S. administrations, crushing economic sanctions, countless diplomatic efforts, and an international military coalition of tens of thousands of foreign troops to restore democracy in the autumn of 1994. As had been the case in 1990-1991, Haiti again faced the daunting task of establishing a democracy in a crumbling society recently freed from dictatorship.

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IV. HAITIAN PARTY SYSTEM: FROM 1994 INTERVENTION TO PRESENT

The U.S.-led intervention was widely considered a success as *Operation Uphold Democracy* rekindled optimism in Haiti's future. This military intervention removed Cedras from power and reinstated Aristide to his rightful position. The military, which had been responsible for persecuting political opposition and thus undermining party institutionalization, was dissolved. It seemed possible that the violent and chaotic political environment that had plagued Haiti might finally be ending. Unfortunately, a lack of party institutionalization continued to exist in Haiti following the UN intervention.

This chapter examines why in the years following the reinstatement of Aristide, the Haitian party system has made little progress towards achieving institutionalization. The primary factor contributing to this dilemma has been the actions of elites, who have attempted to maintain (or achieve) political power through non-institutionalized means. Many Haitian elites have either been unable, or unwilling, to compromise with each other over central issues. Similar to their predecessors, many political actors have been wary of surrendering to parties the personal political influence that they have been able to accumulate.

In particular, President Aristide's actions and policies have contributed to the underdevelopment of the party system. Aristide's continued lack of cooperation with other political leaders and his cultivation and reliance upon his own personal appeal have resulted in political dominance even when out of office. For these reasons and others that the following chapter will examine, Haiti has not been able to attain any of the four

conditions of an institutionalized party system. This chapter evaluates the state of party institutionalization in the immediate aftermath of the intervention and also during the 1995 legislative and presidential elections, the 1996-2001 Preval administration, and the latest Aristide presidency.

A. THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF INTERVENTION

Following the intervention, there was an increased independence of political parties from the ambitions of elite actors, along with several major parties' development of more stable roots in society. These two developments were not independent of each other, but were instead intertwined. As parties gained more independence from individual ambitions, their roots in society stabilized as they were able to concentrate on pursuing the interests of their constituents. Concurrently, as parties stabilized and further entrenched themselves in society via more defined ideological positions, it became more difficult for individual elites to manipulate these parties for their own selfish reasons. Likewise, those parties that were unable to establish permanent roots were forced to either disband or change their platforms in order to reflect the interests of society.

For example, following the re-establishment of democracy, the parties in opposition to Aristide lost a great deal of public support due to their previous affiliation with Cedras, whose regime many Haitians had come to despise. Many Haitians who had been prosecuted, or saw friends and family killed, during the Cedras regime believed that the act of "meeting with and giving legitimacy to parties that supported the military is tantamount to betrayal."[72]

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[72] Farah, "Aides," p. A27.

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A great deal of animosity toward their political rivals remained among Aristide supporters even after the exile of Cedras's junta. One Haitian government official compared the political situation to modern European history by stating, "People who supported the coup don't have a chance of getting elected, period. That is a fact…. For us, those who supported the coup are like the Nazis. We see them not as enemies of Aristide, but as enemies of the democratic process."[73] Those parties that had supported the Cedras regime enjoyed almost no popular support, and consequently, they had to either adapt to society's interest (an end to military rule) or disband. This fact led to an increase in party institutionalization, since those parties that would support candidates who were willing to achieve office through non-democratic means were no longer considered viable contenders within the party system.

Due partially to this lack of support for opposition parties, upon Aristide's return the primary struggle for Haitian political power shifted to within Lavalas as varying factions began to dissolve into separate parties. The debate over whether Aristide should remain president for three more years as compensation for his exile was the driving argument that splintered the Lavalas movement.

According to the 1987 Constitution, no Haitian is eligible to run for reelection immediately after serving as president, which disqualified Aristide from the 1995 presidential election. Having a president whom was less of a populist than Aristide seemed eminent; resultantly this election posed an excellent opportunity for further institutionalization of the party system. However, although Aristide left the presidency,

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[73] Farah, "Aides," p. A27.

he was able to maintain nearly all of his previous political influence after leaving office, thus significantly hampering further party system institutionalization.

During the final months of his term, Aristide's staggering popularity raised the question among many Haitians that since he had been in exile for three years, perhaps his presidency should be extended by an equal amount of time. Considering his resilient personal attractiveness, such an option seemed very likely on the streets of Haiti. As a RAND analyst stated in early 1995, "There is no candidate with the wide base of popular appeal and organization that the President enjoys with his Lavalas party." Furthermore, "Some have argued that the country needs Aristide, both because he is a figure of unity, and because at this critical time he represents the country's best hope for needed continuity and stability."[74] Aristide, placing his personal ambitions above the Haitian Constitution, encouraged his supporters that wanted a three-year extension through statements such as, "I hear you. If you want three more years, you won't be disappointed."[75]

Despite the many possible scenarios, ultimately Aristide, under significant U.S. pressure, on November 30 announced that he would not be a candidate in the presidential election. Instead, Aristide personally selected his close friend and Prime Minister of the 1991 administration, Rene Preval, as the Lavalas Platform candidate. Despite this action, Aristide waited until only two days before the December 17 election to endorse publicly

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[74] Niblack, 1995, p. 19.

[75] Morrell, 1999, p. 130.

his selected protégé by proclaiming, "I will cast my ballot for Rene Preval."[76] Aristide waited as long as he did to support Preval because his friend had earlier refused to support the idea of seeing Aristide remain in power for an additional three years. Nonetheless, through Aristide's decision not to pursue extended rule, the stage was set for Haiti's first transition of power from one democratically elected leader to another.

Although the splintering of Aristide supporters added more parties to an already confusing political landscape, this thesis argues that this occurrence was beneficial to the Haitian party system. The abandonment of the Lavalas movement by many previously loyal factions, such as the FNCD, Aristide's former party, demonstrated that Aristide was losing his messianic appeal with some of his supporters. Many such former followers were no longer satisfied with Aristide's rhetoric, and instead began to believe in other platforms that would serve their constituency's needs more effectively. As a result, political leaders began to stress ideologies and political platforms as the rightful foundation of parties, instead of blind devotion to an influential and charismatic individual.

These formerly-Lavalas opposition parties quickly arose to the forefront of the political arena as they made their opposition to Aristide's extended presidency a central party tenet. They were able to support this position successfully since a division between supporters and opponents of Aristide was a very significant issue already present among many Haitians. Furthermore, it provided the potential to impose order on an otherwise chaotic party system by dividing it into two coalitions. Those political parties that

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[76] Rohter, "President," p. 1.

addressed the issue and adopted a policy either for or against Aristide served Haiti's party system and its citizens well by addressing an important national issue that had already produced a significant social cleavage.

Nonetheless, some Aristide supporters remained faithful to their leader. These followers retained the Lavalas title and instituted the Lavalas Political Platform (PPL), a coalition of three parties with the largest being the Lavalas Political Organization (OPL). Since this coalition, and especially the OPL, constituted the bulk of the former Lavalas movement and remained personally loyal to Aristide, he granted the PPL his endorsement. However, the general coordinator of the OPL, Gerard Pierre-Charles, and many other OPL leaders did not believe that Aristide should stay in power, and instead sought a December 1995 presidential election as per the 1987 Constitution. These individuals believed that, "Lavalas belongs to no one…It is a child of the people. Even if a candidate, a leader in a difficult moment claims paternity, it is the people who have borne Lavalas in their hearts since time immemorial."[77]

This rhetoric and the abandonment by many former followers could not however erase the fact that Aristide remained the patriarch for many within Haiti, and still possessed greater electoral appeal than any other individual or party. Inevitably, tensions mounted over this and other issues between Aristide and Pierre-Charles, driving Aristide to challenge Pierre-Charles and others in his party for the leadership of the remnants of the former Lavalas movement.

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[77] Morrell, 1999, p. 131.

Ultimately, the significance of the 'three more years' argument was a division in the Haitian government between those either for or against Aristide. The dispute between the two sides would be temporarily resolved when Aristide stepped down from the presidency on the originally scheduled date, but would soon thereafter greatly intensify and restructure the Haitian political party system.

B.   1995 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

Although improvements were made toward institutionalizing the party system following Aristide's return, legislative elections the following summer would test the stability of the party system's rules. Lamentably, political parties, many of which were still only the personal vehicles of their leaders, and the government could not reach a consensus over how to administer these contests. In particular, the government's Provisional Elections Council (CEP), the body tasked with ensuring free and fair elections, failed to apply electoral law objectively as the votes were counted and winners declared. Resultantly, these flawed elections cast doubt over the electoral and party systems, as many political actors in both Haiti and abroad questioned the legitimacy of the election results and the government that administered them.

Legislative elections were scheduled for June 25 and marked the first such contests ever held under a democratic Haitian government. Whether or not the international community would see these elections as legitimate would depend upon if the various Haitian political elites, including the President, respected the rule of law and the electoral process. Fortunately, it appeared that during his exile Aristide had realized the importance of cooperating with other political parties as well as with the members of

his own party. Throughout late 1994, he met with leaders of all political parties in order to discuss important topics, such as his economic initiatives.

Perhaps the one topic, however, that received the most attention was how to best establish and select the nine members for a new Provisional Elections Council (CEP), a central body that would oversee the upcoming legislative and municipal elections. Some of Aristide's followers regarded such commendable actions with confusion or concern. Many within the disintegrating Lavalas movement were worried that their leader was being too receptive to their perceived political enemies. Such concerns were unwarranted, however, since when the members comprising the new CEP were announced at the end of the year, a majority of the selectees were Lavalas Platform supporters. Without surprise, the CEP became very ineffective at addressing the complaints of non-Lavalas parties as the legislative elections loomed on the horizon.

Eventually, in April 1995 a majority of parties from across the political spectrum signed a resolution demanding changes to the structure of the CEP while offering a list of possible candidates for incorporation into the council. This occurrence marked the first time in which dozens of small, little-known political parties collectively organized in an effort to match the influence of Aristide and his newly created Lavalas Platform. One of the leaders of this effort and the head of a socialist party, Serge Giles, stated, "We are not prepared to participate in elections, such as they are being prepared." Addressing a central question of the Haitian electoral system, he asked, "Does the electoral council really think it can hold elections without political parties?"[78]

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[78] Norton, "Electoral," p. 1.

However, the CEP was unwilling to modify its membership and denied that it favored any particular political party, candidate, or platform. The CEP President Anselme Remy told reporters, "We will not abdicate our constitutional mission to organize free, honest, and democratic elections." Remy continued, "The resolution wants to substitute the political parties for the electoral council. There is no proof that the Lavalas Political Organization controls the electoral apparatus."[79]

The CEP's apparent ambivalence towards ensuring a fair electoral environment enraged many, leading three opposition parties to boycott the polls. Most of the remaining twenty-seven registered parties did not trust the CEP, and although they would participate, they doubted the fairness with which the CEP would administer the elections. The opposition parties felt that the Aristide-dominated bureaucracy and CEP harbored animosities from the past and had a powerful motivation to tamper with election results. As an unofficial U.S. observer noted before the election, "At the current time, most of the parties do not believe that the electoral playing field is fair."[80]

As the elections approached, it was becoming apparent that opposition to Aristide was solidifying and becoming increasingly organized. Nonetheless, over sixty parties (although only approximately half would actually field a candidate on the ballot) for the various political races took part in the 1995 nation-wide elections. Ultimately, over 12,000 candidates representing thirty parties competed for 110 national legislation seats

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[79] Norton, "Electoral," p. 1.

[80] Carter, 1995, p. 1.

and more than 2,000 municipal offices. This lack of party institutionalization would make the carrying out of elections a daunting task.

Also, repeated delays that had been necessary in order to register voters and approve candidates had compressed candidates' campaigns to only a few days before the decided upon day of the election. The result was that very few Haitians were familiar with the issues, parties, or candidates, and this greatly handicapped the possibility of free and fair elections. Another implication of this massive, simultaneous undertaking was that it threatened to overtax an already weak Haitian electoral administration.

The alleged actions of some political parties added further illegitimacy to the party system. The Haitian media accused several parties of supporting and participating in acts of violence, such as intimidating voters and the torching of polling tables, during the election. These and all of the other difficulties overwhelmed the Haitian electoral apparatus on June 25, as "Chaos and assassination threats kept polls closed across the nation Sunday, preventing hundreds of thousands of Haitians from voting in their first free election in five years."[81] After the polls closed, Dr. Robert Pastor, the lead observer for the U.S.-based Carter Center, stated,

> The elections were nothing less than an administrative disaster, with an insecure vote count. Virtually all the political parties except the Plateforme Politique Lavalas (PPL), which was associated with the government, condemned the election and called for its annulment even before the results were announced.[82]

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[81] Faul, 1995.

[82] Pastor, 1997, pp. 119-120.

Aristide admitted only that there were "technical irregularities" in the elections, in which Lavalas Platform was reported to have won a combined 45 percent of the vote in the first round. The next most successful party was the FNCD, which took a mere 13 percent of the vote during the first round of balloting. Another Lavalas splinter party and Haiti's third largest, KONAKOM, received approximately eight percent in the first round. In order to address the allegations that these results were due to a pro-Lavalas bias within the Electoral Council, Aristide initiated a dialogue with all political sectors.

Between the first and the following rounds of the election, the U.S. State Department, the OAS, and the UN made repeated efforts to bring about a resolution to the differences between the government, the primary opposition leaders, and international observers. Such negotiations initially resulted in open dialogue and promising compromises, as the Haitian authorities expressed willingness to adopt many third party proposals in order to negotiate a settlement. Most impressively, the government agreed to the demand that the president of the CEP be replaced. However, the U.S. Special Haiti Coordinator, Ambassador James Dobbins, reported that ultimately suspicions of both the authorities and the opposition leaders proved "unsurmountable [sic]." The Ambassador testified before Congress,

> Opposition leaders were unwilling to work with the Haitian Electoral Council, even after their key initial demand for the replacement of the president of that council had been met. The Haitian authorities, for their part, harbored concerns that the opposition, aware that it was likely to lose any election in the near future, would take advantage of any role they might be granted in selecting new members of the Electoral Council in order to block completion of the election, and postpone indefinitely the seating of a new parliament.[83]

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[83] U.S. House, <u>Assessment</u>, p. 20.

In the end, even with foreign mediation, "it proved impossible to agree on modalities for altering the membership of the Electoral Council which were broadly acceptable, and legal under Haitian law."[84]

After the first round of balloting Lavalas faced even less opposition. This was because the FNCD and KONAKOM, along with most other parties, "boycotted the subsequent rounds, hurling charges that the elections were rigged and grossly mismanaged."[85] The party system had completely broken down after the first round, and this dilemma instantaneously impacted the perceived legitimacy of the follow-on elections throughout Haiti. In the final round of voting, less than five percent of the registered voters even bothered to show up at the polls.

The lack of an institutionalized party system had brought Haitian democratic consolidation to a virtual standstill. When the final contests were ended in early October and the votes were tallied, Lavalas Platform won 17 of 27 seats in the Senate and 67 of 83 seats in the House of Deputies. Furthermore, many elected independents were Lavalas allies. Throughout the Haitian countryside, the PPL carried the day further by securing 70 percent of 133 mayoral races, and most of the nation's township councils were also won by PPL candidates and their allies. With such a small percentage of voters participating, few believed that these elections reflected the true will of the Haitian people.

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[84] U.S. House, Assessment, p. 21.

[85] Coughlin, 1995.

C. TRANSITION OF POWER TO PREVAL

During the period between the legislative elections and the presidential contest in December 1995, it became apparent that Haiti was still lacking all four of the conditions inherent in an institutionalized party system. There was little agreement on or respect for the rules of competition as evidenced by constant electoral disputes. In addition, over a dozen parties that the electorate did not identify with fragmented the opposition as Haitian democracy approached a one-party system dominated by Lavalas.

Furthermore, even after Preval's election, however, Aristide continued to cast his shadow over Haitian politics. Many Haitians and international observers accurately perceived that Preval's popular appeal derived "not from his own personality or efforts, but from his perceived closeness to Mr. Aristide."[86] Many worried that although Aristide was no longer in office, he would continue to wield power through his successor. As a leading Haitian businessman stated, "The question is whether Preval is going to have room to move, whether Aristide will constantly be breathing down his neck. The best thing that could happen to Preval would be for Aristide to do as Jimmy Carter has done and go off and mediate an international crisis, say like Rwanda."[87]

Such fears were justified, as Aristide maintained as much political power as he could by continuing to pursue his own personal agenda. As mentioned in Chapter 2, a key factor inhibiting party institutionalization is the actions of elites who attempt to maintain power. Aristide's decision to not support Preval until two days before the election and

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[86] Rohter, "President," p. 22.

[87] Rohter, "President," p. 22.

similar actions suggested Aristide was attempting to retain as much power for as long as possible, while preventing Preval from developing on his own.

Although the presidential election promised to be a more straightforward affair than the earlier legislative contests, the continuing unstable nature of interparty relations, dominated by a single party, threatened to affect negatively the democratic process. For example, fourteen candidates were listed on the ballots for the electorate to choose from, and only Preval was easily recognized throughout the countryside. Furthermore, many political parties, at this point labeled "microparties" because of their minute social base, had decided to boycott the election.[88]

Had the thirteen participating opposition parties and the many that were boycotting consolidated their efforts into a single, viable party or coalition and mutually supported a sole candidate, Preval might have faced true competition. However, broad political differences and open conflict remained among these parties; while some were left-wing, former Lavalas Movement organizations, several other parties were led by candidates who had supported the September 1991 coup. In any case, it was obvious that Preval had the upper hand due to the support of Aristide and the Lavalas Platform, as well as the support of the CEP, which was still comprised primarily of Aristide sympathizers.

Ultimately, Preval easily won the election with an astounding 87.9 percent of the vote. On Christmas Eve he was declared president-elect, "winning hands-down an election that most voters boycotted," since only 27.94 percent of the electorate voted.

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[88] See Coughlin, 1995.

Furthermore, twenty-one political parties officially abstained from the election, alleging that the electoral council was "biased in favor of Aristide's three party bloc."[89]

However, no evidence existed to support this claim. In fact, many domestic and international observers, including some former members of the Cedras government, believed that this contest had been one of the most fair and transparent elections in Haitian history despite the low voter turnout. Marc Bazin, who finished a distant second behind Aristide in the 1990 election and had his reputation tarnished by serving as the de facto prime minister during the ensuing military regime, hailed the election as a "huge step forward for democracy."[90] Brian Atwood, the leader of the U.S. observer delegation and director of USAID, concurred, calling the election "a crucial milestone in Haiti's progress toward an enduring democratic order." Although Atwood was disappointed with the low voter turnout, he did not believe that it undermined the results since it was not caused by fear of persecution or disenfranchisement. He stated, "We saw absolutely none of that here. The turnout does not in any way harm or destroy the legitimacy of this process."[91]

Why did many opposition leaders make allegations about a pro-Preval bias when all international observers said this was not the case? Significant portions of the opposition choose to delegitimize the elections when they realized that they were not going to do well. There is no place in an institutionalized party system for the practice of

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[89] Norton, "Preval."

[90] *Montreal*, 1995, p. B1.

[91] Farah, "Haiti," p. A25.

making baseless allegations that undermine the legitimacy of the systems with the sole intent of making up for an electoral defeat.

Accounting for the low turnout, however, although voters were not oppressed, a number of other factors were present that attributed to a disappointing level of participation. The first reason was an apparent lack of tangible economic benefits since the reestablishment of democracy had disillusioned many voters; they had seen little improvement in their lives since the return of democracy and had given up on its promises. Second, "electoral fatigue" from the previous rounds of elections discouraged voters. As Cesar Gaviria, the Secretary-General of the OAS, noted, "Having five votes in six months is too much."[92] The third, and arguably most critical, factor for the low voter turnout was the absence of Aristide from the ballot. As one journalist in Haiti observed a week after Preval's victory, "Many of those who stayed away said they did so because Mr. Aristide was not on the ballot. That only served to reinforce the most important point about Haitian politics: in or out of office, Mr. Aristide remains the only leader with the power to inspire his countrymen to action."[93]

Ultimately, the ability of a single individual to affect voter participation to such an extent greatly hindered the effectiveness of the party system. The fact that many Haitians still related more to Aristide's persona than party platforms demonstrated that parties still did not have stable roots in society. This factor would make it very difficult for the Preval

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[92] *Montreal*, 1995, p. B1.

[93] Rohter, "Haitian's," p. 2.

and political parties to pursue their platforms independent of Aristide's ambitions during the next administration.

D.   PREVAL ADMINISTRATION

The party system completely collapsed during the Preval administration. The primary reason was the continuing ambition of Aristide, who undermined the PPL by establishing his own personally led party, Lavalas Family. This action threw the entire party system into turmoil, as the political landscape entered a continuous state of flux with party platforms incessantly shifting. The electorate did not identify with the parties and, as a result, voter turnout in the 1997 elections was abysmal. Further undermining system institutionalization, the CEP again proved unable to create a stable environment for interparty competition. In addition, some of the blame for this dilemma must go to the opposition and its boycotts, which partially delegitimized elections and stalled the development of the party system's competitive rules and nature. Ultimately, it would take almost two years and Preval's suspension of parliament to overcome these issues, and by then Preval faced an almost non-existent party system.

However, Preval would find the greatest challenge to his presidency would not come from opposition parties, but instead from within his own governing coalition. In his first year as president, Preval encountered resistance to his administration from within the PPL, and in particular the OPL, as a majority of the members still felt stronger allegiance to Aristide than the new president. Almost immediately, Preval lost nearly all support from the party he had been elected to represent, making executive-legislative relations almost nonexistent. In Preval's first month as president, the OPL fought against him over who should be named Prime Minister. The continual presence of Aristide, who always

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had to be included as a "third negotiator," further hampered negotiations and diluted Preval's authority.[94]

Despite a near-total lack of cooperation between Preval's administration and the legislature, the President pursued his pragmatic reforms. However, as one journalist prophetically noted in early 1996, Haitian parties "do not exist beyond their high-profile leadership and the most influential political voice is still that of ex-President Aristide."[95] Furthermore, although Aristide had not run for President in 1995, he soon demonstrated that he was not willing to support anyone else, even his selected successor.

After the election, Aristide remained as the figurehead for the Lavalas Platform, and it was apparent that many who voted for Preval had done so due to their undying allegiance to Aristide. Aristide used his still remaining popular appeal to undermine the legitimacy of Preval by influencing his millions of still faithful followers. However, even if Preval had somehow separated himself and his initiatives from Aristide, his already weak mandate stemming directly from a small minority of the population would have been in serious jeopardy.[96] As one foreign diplomat in Haiti stated immediately before the election, "This remains a very poor and troubled country with an extremely weak government structure. The new President is going to have to confront all of the same

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[94] See Morrell, 1999, p. 131.

[95] Kirk, 1996.

[96] Although Preval had won nearly 88% of all ballots, with only 27% of registered voters participating, this represented the endorsement of only 24% of the electorate.

problems that faced Aristide, but without the very important advantage of being Aristide and having the authority and prestige he enjoys."[97]

In November 1996, taking advantage of Preval's weakness and the diverging interests within the PPL, Aristide officially established a new political party, "Lavalas Family." Preval became a president without a party as many PPL members followed Aristide, and those remaining did not trust nor want to work with Preval due to his former association with Aristide. By the creation of Lavalas Family and the resultant gutting of the PPL, the level of party institutionalization in Haiti was brought to near nothingness as the stabilizing roots of Aristide's former party were totally uprooted. If a single individual could influence a majority of the leading party to come over to his personal vehicle, it demonstrated that personal appeal still possessed more influence in Haiti than any independent political organization.

In response to Aristide's formation of Lavalas Family, the OPL's leader, Gerard Pierre-Charles, characterized Aristide as having "a paternalist, charismatic, populist vision of power. His political sense is directly related to long-standing 'caudillo' traditions."[98] Through Aristide's forming of his own party and the rebuffing of Preval's initiatives, the former priest indeed refurbished his populist credentials.

Senator Jean-Robert Martinez summarized Aristide's action by stating, "The creation of an Aristide party consummates the rupture of Aristide and Preval

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[97] Rohter, "Haiti," p. E-5.

[98] Kirk, 1997.

supporters."[99] The forming of a new party from within Lavalas Platform, the largest and most influential political party, threw the party system into chaos. Many representatives of former Lavalas movement parties were torn between supporting their current party or following the most powerful figure in the nation.

On April 6, 1997, the first series of scheduled legislative elections commenced for nine of the twenty-seven Senate seats and two seats in the Chamber of Deputies, in addition to local council races. These elections were conducted against a backdrop of "political turbulence largely traced to divisions within the Lavalas movement and a perception of governmental and legislative paralysis."[100] The party system was not represented well, as many opposition parties boycotted these elections. Even with the boycott, there were approximately 70 candidates vying for nine available Senate seats. Even worse, the political turmoil of the preceding months had prevented parties from making advances with the electorate as less than 5% of the electorate voted.

Furthermore, the CEP decided not to count the many cast ballots that had been left blank by voters as required by law. The importance of this step was that under Haitian law, if a candidate secures a majority of all votes, including blank votes, he wins the election outright after the first round. However, if a majority is not attained, another round between the most successful candidates is required. Therefore, opposition parties alleged that the CEP's procedural discrepancy determined the outcome of the two Senate races won by Lavalas Family candidates. For the remaining seven seats, no candidate

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[99] Norton, "Aristide."

[100] *Orlando Sentinel*, 1997, p. A21.

secured a majority, resulting in the necessity for a run-off round. However, a second vote was soon postponed indefinitely, and these seven vacant seats, along with the two disputed positions won by Lavalas Family, would become the most contested Haitian political issue during the remainder of Preval's administration.

Ever since its creation in late 1994, Aristide opposition parties had alleged that the CEP had unfairly favored Aristide's coalition, and in particular the OPL, the largest of the three parties within the PPL. After Aristide's self-removal from these parties and the founding of Lavalas Family in late 1996, the OPL then alleged that members of the CEP had manipulated the election results in favor of Lavalas Family. The OPL, who had seen so many of its candidates assisted into office through dubious CEP decisions, called for the annulment of these latest election results and a new contest.

Predictably, Lavalas Family insisted the contest results were fair and the results should stand. However, OAS observers supported the OPL's claims of electoral irregularities and, following international pressure, the CEP postponed the second round of elections until mid-June. The OPL was not satisfied with these actions, and announced that it would boycott the June contests, which soon became a moot point since the CEP eventually announced the indefinite postponement of the second round.

Was the CEP unfairly supporting Aristide's new party, or was the OPL simply trying to manipulate unfavorable election results? It is difficult to tell, but if the first scenario is accurate, then the CEP, which had been formed during Aristide's administration, remained loyal to Aristide by favoring his new party. In this case, this did not bode well for the party system, since it is clear that a supposedly neutral council was

misusing its position, in turn undermining the credibility of the electoral process. If the second scenario is true, and the CEP did act justly, this also did not bode well for the party system, since a major party no longer had faith in the political process. Either way, it was clear that the parties had not yet agreed upon the rules and means for conducting elections, halting any progress towards party institutionalization.

Fighting between parties over the actions of the CEP and other issues of electoral rules continued into 1998. Hardly any new laws were passed as the collapse of the party system paralyzed the entire government. Some foreign observers "summarized the political scene in one word: *chaos*."[101] Nonetheless, in August 1998 the OPL optimistically offered a compromise solution to the ongoing impasse. This party forwarded a new initiative where "the electoral conflict be handled by the new Provisional Electoral Council CEP in charge of organizing the next elections." The OPL said it was prepared to abide by any CEP decision regarding the still-disputed election. Senator Paul Denis stated, "If the new CEP thinks that the results of the 6th April elections are valid we will abide by it, if the CEP decides otherwise, we will accept it."

However, Lavalas Family responded they would never accept this logic, which could constitute "a bad precedent."[102] Instead, Lavalas Family continued to embrace the decision of the ruling CEP at the time of the election. This party was unwilling to have a new CEP possibly overturn the two Lavalas Family representative's victories, even though the previous CEP did not follow the law by not counting blank votes.

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[101] Smith, 2000, p. 315.

[102] *BBC*, August 4, 1998.

The crisis culminated in Preval's shutting down of the Parliament in January 1999 in a bid to end the power struggle between the differing parties. While this suspension of the legislature could have worked against the president, progress towards establishing a functioning party system was soon attained as President Preval hosted a series of negotiations among all political leaders. Equally important, Lavalas Family did not oppose such meetings, despite the fact that many of the political leaders involved with these discussions were former supporters of the 1991 coup d'état and Cedras regime. This progress was consummated on March 16, when Preval announced the composition of a new CEP that was acceptable to all parties.

The fact that the interparty deadlock was resolved at all was a promising event. However, it had taken nearly two years and the shuting down of the legislature for the various actors in the Haitian party system to agree on how to overcome the disputed interparty competition of the 1997 elections. Clearly, the rules and nature of party competition were far from institutionalized. Furthermore, legislative elections were to be held again the following year, and these contests would also surely test Haiti's fragile party and electoral systems. Would the political actors involved be able to learn from past debacles and forge a viable party system?

1. 2000 Legislative Elections

Haiti eventually conducted legislative elections in May 2000 and the high first round voter turnout offered hope that the Haitian party system had regained stability via an electorate that saw the CEP-run elections as a legitimate process. However, influenced by still too many parties and candidates on the ballot, the CEP chose not to abide by the law when counting the ballots. Perceiving that the leading party retained an unfair

advantage, opposition leaders lost faith in the fairness of the electoral process. By the final round, legitimacy had again been lost, as voter turnout was nearly non-existent. However, although the party system had degenerated into a de facto single-party system, a slight point of optimism was the convergence of many small opposition parties into a united front to counter Lavalas Family. Unfortunately, this occurrence was the only sign of further party system institutionalization to arise from these flawed elections.

Despite a new CEP, many elites still saw the party and electoral systems as illegitimate. Even before the CEP had posted the initial results of the first round of voting on May 29, most parties had already rejected the forthcoming results. Similar to the reaction towards the 1997 elections, many again alleged that by counting only the top four contenders in each race, election officials had skewed the results by giving candidates from Lavalas Family an illegal advantage. The main point of contention was over the first round of Senate races, where of the 19 open seats, the CEP awarded 18 to Lavalas Family while "staunchly refusing to conduct a recount."[103]

Consequently, many Haitians and outside observers saw Lavalas Family as having unduly influenced the CEP somehow. As one political analyst offered, "Lavalas isn't content just to win. It wants to obliterate the opposition."[104] Allegations of impropriety against the CEP grew so heated that the Council Chairman, Leon Manus, fled to the United States rather than endorse the first-round results. The second and final round was held in July as Aristide's Lavalas Family party would ultimately win more than 80 percent of local and parliamentary seats. 18 of 19 Senate seats had been secured,

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[103] *Agence France*, 2000, p. 1.

[104] *Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*, 2000, p. 2A.

while out of 82 deputy seats, Aristide's party claimed 72, with many in the opposition leaning towards supporting Aristide. Out of 133 major mayoral offices throughout the nation, Lavalas Family held 106. As a pro-Aristide radio station broadcasted, "The next government…will face no major challenge throughout its term."[105] Clearly, the results of this election threatened to plunge Haiti into a single-party government and totally undermine the foundations of a competitive party system of government.

The proliferation of parties and candidacies in the uninstitutionalized party system contributed again to electoral chaos. The fact that 29,000 candidates were competing for 1,500 positions undoubtedly influenced the CEP's decision to implement again a simplified yet illegal tallying procedure. With an average number of nearly twenty candidates per single contest, the CEP was pressured to utilize an abbreviated method in order to achieve results in a timely manner. Regardless, opposition leaders alleged that Senate seats that were awarded without an absolute majority in the first round should have been subject to a second round since the process used was illegal and delegitimized the election.

Initially, it appeared that the major parties had been able to establish stable roots in society. Although the campaign was marred by seven months of politically motivated violence that left fifteen people dead, election monitors estimated that an impressive 60% of the 4 million registered voters participated.[106] This high voter turnout was the result of a number of factors, such as there was no organized boycott led by opposition parties.

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[105] *BBC*, August 19, 2000.

[106] See *Facts on File*, 2000, p. 1, for further details of this election.

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Nonetheless, this thesis argues that this high voter turnout was less due to the party system per se and was driven primarily by the Haitian peoples' desire to take control of their government and their nation. Haiti had not had a functioning government since June 1997, and Preval had ruled by decree since January 1999, following his suspension of Parliament. It had been over three years since the previous aborted elections, and as one U.S. editor believed, "Haitians want to vote, and they showed this by turning out in record numbers on May 21."[107] Ultimately, this level of participation raised hopes of "a return to democratic government."[108]

However, following the interparty fighting that occurred after the botched first round, voters quickly lost faith in parties and elections. Resultantly, voter turnout in the final round of voting was abysmally low. Lavalas Family's own estimates held the amount of participating voters in the second round at a mere five to ten percent. The Socialist official Victor Benoit, however, estimated the second round turnout at less than one percent of all eligible voters. OPL leader Pierre-Charles agreed with Benoit by declaring, "The moment of truth has come, and the people's abstention has shown the Lavalas party's unpopularity."[109]

One point of optimism did arise within the party system in the wake of these elections. Unlike in the aftermath of the divisive 1997 legislative elections, opposition parties converged into a united front in order to confront the legislative representatives of an Aristide-led party. Fifteen opposition parties formed the coalition *Group de*

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[107] *Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*, 2000, p. 2A.

[108] *Latin American Monitor*, 2000, p. 5.

[109] *Agence France*, 2000, p. 1.

Convergence, and in so doing took a first step towards limiting the proliferation of parties that complicated electoral choices and governance. Under the supervision of an OAS delegation, opposition representatives met with those from Lavalas Family in mid-October. The Convergence Coalition continued to call for a reexamination of the parliamentary elections while also demanding the organization of a new CEP to oversee the upcoming presidential vote set for November 26. Ariel Henry, a member of the Convergence Coalition, stated that without a new CEP, "It's obvious that Nov. 26 elections will not work."[110]

2. November 2000 Presidential Elections

By the end of the 2000 presidential election, the Haitian party system had totally collapsed. Despite Aristide's attempts to pursue a more moderate agenda and offer substantial compromises to his opponents, these actors no longer had any trust in the CEP or the fairness of the party system. After Aristide won the election, the Haitian party system ceased to exist, as an opposing coalition set out to establish an 'alternative' national regime outside of the constitutionally provided democratic system.

Early in 2000, "no other candidate [appeared] capable of denying Mr. Aristide in the December presidential election,"[111] and Aristide could have successfully campaigned on his populist agenda as he had done in 1990. However, he instead toned down his rhetoric and campaigned on a more moderate reform platform based on the principle that "Haiti cannot isolate itself from the rest of the world. The geo-economic reality must

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[110] *Reuters*, 2000.

[111] James, 2000, p. 5.

provoke a deep reflection to maintain equilibrium, maintain calm, and find a middle way."[112]

This ideologic change away from his previous leftist views was the first major indication that Aristide was willing to campaign on a topic that did not directly appease or assist his constituency, primarily the poor masses. As a Haitian business leader stated, "He does not need to make this policy change to win votes – he will win anyhow. So we accept this is a genuine change of course which will benefit the country."[113] Furthermore, Aristide was willing to negotiate with his opponents and not shut them out of the Lavalas-dominated government. The day following the election Aristide declared, "There will be a place for everyone in my government. To have a peaceful Haiti, the opposition is indispensable. …It is part of our democratic fate."[114]

However, despite Aristide's moderated platform and conciliatory views, interparty relations suffered a complete breakdown. Attempts between Lavalas Family and the Convergence Coalition to find a compromised solution for the contested legislative elections collapsed. Resultantly, opposition parties would not give legitimacy to the Lavalas-dominated government, and much of Aristide's opposition boycotted the presidential election. Such organized protests assisted Aristide's efforts by contributing towards low voter turnout for the opposition, and on November 26, 2000, Aristide easily defeated six virtually unknown opponents.

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[112] James, 2000, p. 5.

[113] James, 2000, p. 5.

[114] *Cable News Network*, 2000.

In response, the Convergence Coalition declared that they would create "a peaceful alternative" to the legitimate, democratically elected Aristide administration.[115] Convergence naively offered an invitation for Lavalas Family representatives to attend an organizational meeting, which Lavalas representatives rejected. Senator Sonson Pierre stated, "Lavalas Family cannot support the initiative of which the goal is to install an illegal government."[116]

Convergence announced its own alternative president, 75-year old former presidential candidate, lawyer, and human rights activist Gerard Gourgue. Further adding tension to the situation, Evans Paul, a leading member of Convergence, called for the people "to rise up" and demonstrate their rejection of Aristide.[117] Ultimately, this struggle for power outside of the party system posed a significant threat to the legitimacy of Haitian democracy.

E.   CONCLUSIONS

When comparing the current Haitian political environment with that of 1990-1991, it is clear that Aristide remains the single most influential political force in Haiti. His presence, whether or not he is serving as president, is the continuation of Haiti's long tradition of a single leader who rises above the political system. He is regarded by a majority of the population as the true, legitimate ruler of Haiti, even when someone else is serving as president. Although he was elected to office through democratic means, he will most likely remain the patriarch of Haiti's body politic well into the future.

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[115] See *Cable News Network*, 2000.

[116] *BBC*, January 25, 2001.

[117] *Associated Press*, 2001.

Such was the political environment on February 7, 2001, as Aristide was again inaugurated as Haiti's President. Despite the many dilemmas facing Haitian democracy at the beginning of Aristide's second presidency, Haiti must institutionalize its party system. Although the 15-party Convergence Coalition remains far from institutionalized and has been unable to gather significant popular support, it may someday consolidate into a single, effective political party as its leaders attempt to oppose Lavalas Family. However, this coalition must abandon the idea of forming an alternative government outside of the electoral system. Such a blatant disregard for the democratic process will only undermine the legitimacy of any success it may have in opposing what they perceive as an illegitimate one-party system.

Separately, election boycotts, a political tactic that offers some limited benefits, are a sign of a weakly institutionalized system that lacks stability in the rules and the nature of interparty competition. While parties may feel the need to use boycotts as protest measures, the leaders of such parties must realize that boycotts are the symptoms of, and not the cure for, a non-institutionalized party system. Opposition parties should employ boycotts only as a last resort, and only after negotiations have failed.

If a coalition of opposition parties, along with the rest of the Haitian party system, is to become institutionalized, outside assistance could be a beneficial factor. The international community should understand how foreign actions have influenced Haitian democratic consolidation. Furthermore, throughout Haiti's history, no other international actor has had more of an impact upon Haiti than the United States. U.S. actions have not always been conducted with noble intentions, and the idea of furthering democratic values is a recent undertaking. Nonetheless, if Haiti is to consolidate her democracy,

"Yankee" assistance may be needed. In the following chapter, U.S. efforts in Haiti to further democracy and in particular instill an institutionalized party system will be examined, in an effort to discover what actions have had positive, and negative, effects.

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V.   U.S. POLICIES TO PROMOTE DEMOCRATIZATION

For nearly two centuries, the United States government has rarely designed its foreign policy towards Haiti with the goal of promoting democratic development. Only in the past decade, beginning in earnest during the Clinton administration, have U.S. policy makers seriously sought to promote democratic ideals in this Caribbean nation. This chapter examines U.S. policy in Haiti, with an emphasis placed on how U.S. actions have either promoted or hampered the development of an institutionalized party system. The years following the 1994 intervention are especially scrutinized, since it is during this period that the United States has made a committed effort to defend and assist in the institutionalization of Haiti's political party system. This analysis of the successes and failures of past initiatives will help assess which policies will be successful in the future.

A.   U.S. POLICIES TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY: AN OVERVIEW

During the Cold War, the containment of Communism overshadowed nearly all other U.S. foreign policies, including the promotion of democratic ideals. The perceived threat of the spread of international Communism often drove the United States to support and sponsor undemocratic regimes, since although many of these governments were authoritarian and oppressive, they served as allies against far-left political movements and Communist sympathizers. During and after the final days of the Cold War, however, the Bush and Clinton administrations found that many of these former allies had become political liabilities. The arrest of General Manuel Noriega following the 1989 invasion of Panama is the quintessential example of how some former U.S. allies quickly became foes as the Cold War rapidly thawed.

As the Soviet Union collapsed, President Bush foresaw a "New World Order" in which the United States, with the assistance of its allies, would suppress the aggressive initiatives of rogue states and other outlaw international regimes. However, the aggressive promotion of democracy would not be part of United States security strategy towards Haiti until President Clinton took office in January 1993.

Although President Clinton swore to "focus on the economy like a laser," and deal with foreign policy whenever it entered "into play as it affects the economy," a policy of promoting global democracy eventually solidified.[118] In his January 1994 State of the Union address, the President summed up his belief in the benefits of promoting democratic institutions abroad by reasoning, "Democracies don't attack each other." He further elaborated, "ultimately the best strategy to insure our security and to build a durable peace is to support the advance of democracy elsewhere."[119]

President Clinton was not the first to embrace a concept that had already been termed the "Democratic Peace." This liberal theory, usually attributed to Immanuel Kant, had already been accepted by many academics as well as influential national policy makers. For example, as early as 1989 one author touted this philosophy as "the closest thing we have to an empirical law in the study of international relations."[120] Throughout his presidency, three core goals would consistently comprise his administration's national security strategy:

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[118] See Schulzinger, 1998, p. 353, for further review of U.S. foreign policy development during the early Clinton administration.

[119] *New York Times*, 1994, p. A17.

[120] Levy, 1989, p. 88.

1. To enhance America's security;

2. To bolster America's economic prosperity; and,

3. To promote democracy and human rights abroad.[121]

The President justified his inclusion of the third tenet by stating that without the successful achievement of this policy goal, U.S. national security and economic prosperity would face increased risk. In order to avoid such possible dilemmas, he stated,

> The United States works to strengthen democratic and free market institutions and norms in all countries, particularly those making the transition from closed to open societies. This commitment to see freedom and respect for human rights is not only just, but pragmatic. Our security depends upon the protection and expansion of democracy worldwide, without which repression, corruption and instability could engulf a number of countries and threaten the stability of entire regions.[122]

However, the Clinton administration's commitment to this tenet would be put to the test almost immediately due to the overthrow of a democratic government in the impoverished nation of Haiti. Historically, with few exceptions such as President Franklin Roosevelt's 'Good Neighbor' Policy, the United States has seldom promoted democratic ideals throughout Latin America. "The United States embraced democracy inconsistently, preoccupied with competing security and economic interests."[123] Additionally, as with most governments with extensive bureaucracies, "Internal obstacles further constrained U.S. effectiveness."[124] Such internal obstacles and conflicts, such as

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[121] The White House, 1999, p. iii.

[122] The White House, 1999, p. 25.

[123] Isaacs, 2000, p. 262.

[124] Isaacs, 2000, p. 262.

between the Department of State and the Central Intelligence Agency, would arise again as the U.S. dealt with the overthrow of Haiti's Aristide government in 1991. Resultantly, a divided U.S. front towards Haiti existed before, during, and after the Cedras military regime was in power.

Another enduring trend of U.S. policy towards Latin America nations is the primary focus on maintaining regional stability at the expense of democratic ideals. In order to accomplish this goal, some type of stable and functioning state within a country needs to remain intact. The United States has not always preferred to maintain specific regimes per se, but instead has concentrated on ensuring the continuance of state structures that provided national stability. In other words, "U.S. policy towards political transitions in postwar Latin America has centered around the goal of securing regime changes that ensure the continuity of the state."[125]

As long as the established entities of a state, such as the armed forces, legal apparatus, and financial systems remain intact, the U.S. has been willing to support democracies and authoritarian regimes alike. Nearly any Latin American administration that ensured continued cooperation with U.S. policies and ideals has almost always received U.S. support. Historically, continued economic and financial cooperation has been a central issue, as was the case with Fulgencio Batista's Cuban regime. In the postwar period, Washington's tacit acceptance of any Latin American nation that was anti-Communist, regardless of the type of regime, is a perfect example of this fact. This pattern continued after the Cold War and into the 'third wave' of international

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[125] Morley, 1997, p. 363.

democratization that followed. Unfortunately, many U.S. policy makers "have interpreted a change from dictatorship to democratic regime, first and foremost, as a mechanism for preserving the state, not as a mode of promoting democratization and the values that accompany it."[126]

B.   U.S. POLICIES TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY IN HAITI: 1957-1990

1.   U.S. Policies during the Duvalier Regimes

While the despicable acts of the Duvaliers were being conducted for nearly three decades, the United States ignored the dilemma, sometimes even supporting these barbarous regimes. Today, now that a very fragile democracy has been established in Haiti, the United States must correct the results of past policies that strangled the development and institutionalization of a political party system.

Not only did the United States tacitly support the bloody Duvalier regime, but it was also with the assistance of U.S. policies that the Duvaliers were able to achieve national power. For example, the United States government assisted Duvalier in his successful presidential campaign. As the Haitian anthropologist Remy Bastien argued,

> In 1957 it was the opinion of the United States Department of State that Haiti needed a middle-class, middle-of-the-road reformer. Of the four candidates for the presidency, only one met the requirements…Dr. Duvalier seemed the perfect choice.[127]

After 'Papa Doc' abolished Haitian democracy and established a dictatorship, the United States continued to support him because he "was consistent in his anti-Communism." It is now clear that the longevity of the Duvalier regime and the suppression of democracy "was largely a U.S. creation and that he would never have

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[126] Morley, 1997, p. 364.

[127] Bellegarde-Smith, 1989, pp. 94-95.

survived without the United States."[128] Upon examination, it becomes clear that U.S. policies both directly and indirectly contributed to many of Duvalier's actions that undermined party institutionalization.

For example, approximately seven months after his election via democratic means, Duvalier assumed the role of dictator as he declared a state of siege and suspended all constitutional guarantees in order to silence his political opposition. Instead of condemning these undemocratic actions, the United States sent a Marine survey team led by a Major General to Port-au-Prince as guests of Duvalier. Their mission was to assess the feasibility of sending a much larger team to Haiti, "ostensibly for the purpose of training [Duvalier's] army," but in actuality, it was "a symbol of U.S. support."[129] At the sight of the initial assessment team,

> The opposition panicked. Following the occupation emotions had run so high that for many years Marine guards at the American Embassy were not allowed to wear their regular uniforms. Now the Marines were returning to Duvalier's invitation to train his army! The psychological impact was important. He wanted the Marines as a token of U.S. support.[130]

The Marine mission would eventually land and Duvalier would receive all of the U.S. support he could have wanted. With democracy suspended and with the clear backing of the United States, Duvalier concentrated his personal power and never considered reinstating democracy. This U.S.-assisted path towards authoritarianism,

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[128] Bellegarde-Smith, 1989, p 95.

[129] Diederich, 1969, p. 126.

[130] Diederich, 1969, p. 111.

which would eventually claim the lives of tens of thousands of political opponents, culminated in 1964 when Duvalier declared himself 'President for Life.'

When 'Papa Doc' died in 1971, the United States could have intervened in order to promote democratic elections. Instead, Washington continued to support the right-wing Duvaliers, as "U.S. Ambassador Clinton Knox personally supervised the transition from one Duvalier to another."[131] Duvalier's personally selected successor, his nineteen-year old son, continued his father's oppressive policies as the United States lent its support until it became apparent that his regime was unable to maintain control of the nation.

2.   U. S. Policies during Transition Years (1986-1990)

Even after the end of the Duvalier regime in 1986, the United States continued to support the violent military regimes that followed, further undermining the chances for the emergence of an institutionalized party system. Washington backed these interim governments "partly out of a belief that they were pursuing democratic policies and genuinely wanted to hand over power to an elected civilian government. In addition, support given to the Haitian leaders was also based on the US fear of the spread of communism in the region, particularly emanating from neighboring Cuba."[132] Consequently, no support of any kind was given to political opponents of the ruling military regime. Instead of lending support to opposition parties, in 1986 and 1987 "Washington praised the generals for 'liberalizing' Haiti, doubled financial aid [to the

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[131] Trouillot, 1995, p. 129.

[132] von Hippel, 2000, 97.

ruling government], and provided military advisers to train the Haitian army in riot control."[133]

Those few policies that the U.S. did employ towards establishing Haitian democracy were both shortsighted and narrow in focus, and none addressed supporting political parties or the party system. With few exceptions, "US democracy assistance to Haiti during this period was mainly directed at the holding of elections, and not at the many societal changes that were necessary for sustained democratic reform."[134] Although some Washington policy makers would have liked to seen democracy take hold in Haiti, they were unwilling to dedicate the needed funds, energy, and attention to the problem to make this dream a reality. Dr. Georges Fauriol, Director of Latin American Studies, Center for Strategic and International Issues, testified before Congress,

> In 1986 Secretary Shultz's call for democracy in Haiti a week before Duvalier's collapse covered up the fact that this mission could not be accomplished in the near term. It catapulted American policy designs into the future without defining the near-term process. Washington paid the price for this lack of definition when the elections of late 1987 did not match expectations and when the short-lived Manigat government subsequently collapsed.[135]

Fauriol claimed that further political dilemmas could be avoided if policy makers were willing to pursue a more vigorous policy of supporting Haitian democracy. However, such a policy would entail increased "resources, political will, consistency, and

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[133] Bellegarde-Smith, 1990, p. 155.

[134] von Hippel, 2000, pp. 97-98.

[135] U.S. House, 1989, p. 66.

a long term commitment; assets that are not always strong points in the present framework of American politics and foreign policy."[136]

Furthermore, the U.S. did not directly support any opposition figures or political parties that might have successfully pursued democratic change since no such actors apparently existed. When asked whom the U.S. could back as a reformist candidate, Fauriol stated, "When it comes to developing a modernizing regime, the cast of characters is either limited or frightfully untested. This seriously limits U.S. options."[137]

Complicating possible democratic assistance further, the United States saw other Haitian issues as more important than the establishing of a democratic government in the five years following the ouster of the Duvaliers. Primarily, the one recurring Haitian issue that drew more attention from Washington than any other was the contentious refugee problem. During the Cold War, the U.S. government welcomed nearly all refugees from Communist countries while either detaining or deporting thousands of refugees fleeing political oppression in Haiti.

The refugee issue, which was the direct result of a lack of democratic freedoms and economic opportunity in Haiti, would remain Washington's primary Haitian concern even after the brief democratic rule of Aristide ended in 1991. While the concept of supporting democracy was one of Clinton's three primary national security goals, the arrival of Haitian refugees on U.S. shores would be a main force driving U.S. policy toward Haiti under both Bush and Clinton.

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[136] U.S. House, 1989, p. 66.

[137] U.S. House, 1989, p. 65.

C. U.S. POLICIES TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY IN HAITI FOLLOWING 1990 ARISTIDE ELECTION

Immediately following Aristide's landslide election, the United States officially offered Haiti's new president its full support. Some conservative actors, however, distrusted the leftist priest and his policies and attempted to undermine his credibility. For these policy makers, the institutionalization of Haiti's party system was of distant concern in comparison to the supposed economic and security threat that Aristide posed. Resultantly, after the Haitian leader's ouster, President Bush attempted to force Aristide to moderate his behavior in order to reach a compromise with the military regime. At the end of the Bush administration, the maintaining of a functioning state structure in Haiti was more important than furthering democratic institutions, while even the Clinton administration attempted to reinstate Aristide via negotiations with the military. Ultimately, however, when negotiations failed, President Clinton resorted to force in order to reinstate Aristide and uphold Haiti's democracy.

1. U.S. Policies toward Haiti during Initial Aristide Government

Despite the U.S. government's poor record of relations with Haiti, the United States rallied behind Aristide after his presidential election. On December 18, 1990, two days after his election, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Bernard Aronson stated that relations with Aristide "got off to a good start." After meeting with the new Haitian President in Port-au-Prince, Aronson stressed that the United States "looked forward to working with him."[138]

However, not all U.S. government actors shared Secretary Aronson's optimism. Many worried about the low priority Aristide's campaign gave to Haitian-U.S. relations.

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[138] Burns, 1993, pp. 333.

For example, Aristide had proclaimed that his administration might be unwilling to accept U.S. assistance, claiming that past U.S. involvements had only resulted in misery for his people. Therefore, former President Jimmy Carter and former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara argued that "[Aristide] was violently anti-U.S. and hostile" after meeting with the Haitian leader immediately after his election.[139]

Furthermore, many of Aristide's policy initiatives did not endear the new leader to many U.S. economic elites. Because of his populist views and initiatives, "Aristide not only antagonized the Haitian business community but also U.S. investors with his proposals."[140] Such sentiments were not confined to the U.S. economic sector, as many influential actors within the U.S. government also saw Aristide as a threat to their interests. For example, the CIA believed that Aristide and his far-left policies posed a threat to political and economic stability within the region.

Whether or not CIA efforts had any impact on removing Aristide from office, a military junta in September 1991 ousted him from the Presidential Palace. It appeared that a peaceful, democratic transition of power had again eluded Haiti, as Aristide's exile and the presence of General Raoul Cedras' military regime would draw the United States once again into direct involvement with Haitian domestic political affairs.

2.   U.S. Policies toward Haiti during Cedras Regime

Despite initial support for President Aristide's reinstatement, the Bush administration soon modified its position. It made it clear that while the United States fully supported the ideal of democracy, President Aristide himself did not share such

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[139] Burns, 1993, pp. 334.

[140] Morley, 1997, p. 364.

backing. On October 7, White House Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater stated, "It is the rule of democracy that we support." However, he continued, "We don't know [if Aristide will return to power] in the sense that the government in his country is changing and considering any number of different possibilities."[141]

The conservative elements of the U.S. media echoed such sentiments, reflecting the growing unease that many government officials had toward Aristide. A *Washington Post* editorial published the day before Fitzwater's comments argued, "Returning President Aristide to Haiti is going to be difficult for reasons to which he himself has greatly contributed." This editorial correctly asserted that Aristide's return "will require, at the least…a kind of democracy that goes beyond mob rule."[142] Simply reinstating Aristide would not solve the democratic dilemma in Haiti, and those who thought it would did not fully understand the dire political environment which existed.

Even if some outside force quickly reasserted Aristide into Haiti, it is likely that the military would have eventually seized power again. One observer accurately summed that the army,

> Which for years has been a bastion of corruption and profiteering, considers itself virtually a fourth branch of the government in Haiti. Many officers and soldiers are known to regard the president as commander-in-chief in name only, with no real authority over the military.[143]

Additionally, during the Cold War and into the Bush presidency, the Haitian military's zeal for crushing leftist opponents had placed it on very friendly terms with the

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[141] Ives, 1995, p. 66.

[142] *Washington Post*, 1991, p. C6.

[143] Hockstader, 1991, p. A32.

CIA and the Department of Defense. President Bush, a former head of the CIA, did want to reestablish democracy in Haiti, but he did not want to "antagonize" the military in the process.[144] Instead, his administration focused on achieving a negotiated settlement while ensuring "the survival of an, albeit reformed, military institution with its external linkages to the Pentagon intact."[145]

Resultantly, President Bush shied away from aggressive policies designed to force the military junta out of power. Taking little direct action, the U.S. was largely satisfied to allow the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of American States (OAS) to take the lead in pursuing Aristide's possible return. The Bush administration's only direct action against the Cedras regime was participating in the UN and OAS trade and oil embargo. However, within three months, many U.S. businesses almost entirely disregarded these agreements without any condemnation or action from Washington.[146]

Meanwhile, Aristide languished in exile while Cedras entrenched himself as the leader of Haiti. U.S. policy under Bush accepted the status quo provided by the Cedras regime, in effect consisting of actions aimed at:

1. Restoring political stability via a negotiated settlement between Aristide and the Haitian military;

2. Maintaining access to cheap labor for U.S.-owned assembly plants in Haiti and throughout the region; and,

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[144] Morley, 1997, p. 365.

[145] Morley, 1997, p. 365.

[146] Ives, 1995, p. 73.

3. Professionalizing the Haitian police and military so as they could continue to control the civilian population; and above all else,

4. Preventing an exodus of Haitian refugees destined for the United States.[147]

As the 1992 presidential campaign began, the Bush administration attempted to minimize the amount of national attention concerning all aspects of the Haitian dilemma. However, the refugee problem rose to the forefront of U.S. public perception in April 1992 when a surge of thousands of illegal Haitian immigrants began to arrive on U.S. shores, seeking asylum from the Cedras regime's repression. Bush, and initially, Clinton, were more concerned with this immediate dilemma than they were with the idea of reinstating a democratic Haitian government. In order to stem this growing tide, President Bush on May 24, 1994 announced a policy where, "all Haitian refugees picked up at sea will be returned to Haiti."[148]

In an attempt to diffuse the growing refugee crisis, the Bush administration pressured Aristide to meet with Cedras' Prime Minister Marc Bazin in order to negotiate his return to Haiti. In so doing, the United States could not hide its lack of respect for the results of a legitimate election, one of the four conditions that are required for the existence of an institutionalized party system. The symbolism of Aristide's negotiating with Bazin, who was the distant second in votes behind him in the 1990 election, was not lost on some observers. Jean Casimir, Aristide's Ambassador to Washington, pointed out that, "The person who was resoundingly defeated is now being put forward" by the

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[147] See McFayden, 1995, p. 5.

[148] Fauriol, Haitian, p. 191.

military-controlled government.[149] Ultimately, however, negotiations began and would continue even after Bush stepped down as President. This approach towards pressuring Aristide into negotiations clearly signaled that at the end of the Bush administration the maintaining of a functioning state structure in Haiti was more important than furthering democratic institutions.

During the 1992 presidential campaign, Clinton stated that if elected he would, "turn up the heat and try to restore the elected government."[150] The former governor won the election, and during the first months of his presidency negotiations between Aristide and Cedras' regime continued, as Clinton offered more support for Aristide's position than had his predecessor. By April, however, discussions stalled over one primary issue: amnesty for the military junta regarding alleged human rights violations. Under continuing pressure by the U.S. government, however, Aristide and the Haitian military continued to negotiate an end to the standoff. The culmination of these negotiations was the July 1993 Governors Island Agreement, a compromise that offered a working solution. This comprehensive 10-part pact included the following major stipulations that both Aristide and Cedras agreed upon:

1. President Aristide would return to Haiti on October 30, 1993;

2. General Cedras and his allies would be allowed to retire with Aristide selecting their replacements;

3. An amnesty granted to the members of the coup for any alleged crimes; and, most importantly for the institutionalization of the party system,

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[149] French, 1992, p. 2.

[150] Martin, 1997, p. 2.

4. The "organization, under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS), of a political dialogue between the representatives of the political parties represented in the parliament."[151]

This fourth item was extremely significant insofar as the future of democracy in Haiti was concerned, since two international diplomatic bodies, the UN and the OAS, were now becoming directly involved in the fate of the nation's democratic process. Under this agreement, representatives of these organizations would mediate an agreement between Haitian political parties that would result in a political truce between all parties and an improved ability of Parliament to operate more efficiently.[152] Such international involvement in Haiti's political system would tie the democratic fate of Haiti directly to the prestige of those nations that would become involved via the overseeing organizations. In so doing, the hope existed that such a mediating presence might greatly assist in the institutionalization of the Haitian party system.

Shortly after the signing of this Agreement, nearly all involved parties initiated its implementation. Parliament reconvened and ratified Robert Malval as Prime Minister. Resultantly, UN sanctions were suspended on August 27, 1993. This optimistic trend would not last, however, as the *USS Harlan County*, carrying the first troops of the UN Mission in Haiti (UNMIH), was met by a violent mob in Port-au-Prince on October 11 and was turned away. From that moment, the Governors Island Agreement was "effectively dead,"[153] as "Cedras violated every part of the brokered deal. It mattered

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[151] Fauriol, <u>Haitian</u>, pp. 208-209.

[152] Fauriol, <u>Haitian</u>, p. 208.

[153] Gibbons, 1999, p. 5.

little that Aristide, as well as the United States and the UN, meticulously complied with the agreement's terms."[154]

Despite the collapse of the Governors Island Agreement and continuing political violence in Haiti, the Clinton administration continued to pursue a compromise between Aristide and the Cedras regime. In order to achieve success via this strategy, Aristide was pressured to 'play nice' with the military junta and his opponents in the parliament and agree to concessions that might contribute to a peaceful settlement. Despite his agreement to the failed Governors Island Agreement, many in Washington saw Aristide as unwilling to compromise. Resultantly, and because a negotiated solution would be preferable to an invasion, "there was tremendous pressure on Aristide to negotiate some kind of power-sharing arrangements with the generals, to give priority to national reconciliation."[155] However, by May 1994, it became clear that it was the Haitian generals who were uncompromising, not Aristide. Resultantly, President Clinton increased the embargo and decided to use force in order to reinstate Aristide.

If Aristide had agreed to a settlement that allowed the military junta to retain a role in a power-sharing agreement, serious damage would have been done to the institutionalization of the Haitian party system. Such a solution would have sent a clear message that the military had the right to seize political power as they saw fit. Therefore, Aristide was correct in his unwillingness to share political power with the military.

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[154] Stotzky, 1997, p. 33.

[155] Morley, 1997, p. 369.

D. U.S. POLICIES TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY IN HAITI FOLLOWING INTERVENTION

This thesis argues that the United States did not consider the development of an institutionalized party system as a long-term policy goal in Haiti at the time of Aristide's reinstatement as president. However, in the years following the intervention, the actions of many U.S. policy makers, especially the State Department and other diplomats in the Clinton administration, have in fact directly contributed to institutionalizing the party system.

The short-term objectives of the U.S.-led intervention included stopping human rights violations, ending the threat of a mass refugee exodus, and demonstrating that the United States kept its international commitments. Most importantly, democracy was restored as the lawfully elected President was returned to office. Not all policy makers concurred with these goals, however, such as the CIA, who did not believe that it was in U.S. security interests to see Aristide reinstated.

After Aristide was returned to the Presidential Palace and the military phase of the intervention was concluded, the Department of State instituted programs aimed at supporting free and fair elections and funding democratic assistance programs. Additionally, President Clinton and other policy makers, both Democrat and Republican, maintained diplomatic pressure on Haitian elites in a dedicated attempt to further institutionalize the Haitian political party system.

1. Democracy Assistance Programs: Elections and Parties

Ultimately, the amount of money spent towards furthering democracy overseas is no guarantee of success, nor can one hope to ascertain the actual results based solely on such data. Neither the best of intentions, nor large amounts of capital (both economic and

political), can guarantee results. Nonetheless, financial aid has been a critical component of keeping democracy alive in Haiti following the reinstatement of democracy in 1994. For example, in 1995, over 75% of all capital flow into Haiti was from official sources either in the form of loans or direct aid.[156]

The Department of State, particularly through USAID, is the primary government organization that funds democratic assistance programs. These programs are designed to further democracy by directly funding foreign governments and foreign political actors so they can pursue various reform efforts, including steps that institutionalize their political party systems. Additionally, State Department officials, USAID representatives, and funded NGO members may become directly involved in the implementation of some programs.

U.S. financial and personnel support for free and fair elections is a common example of a Department of State democracy program. For example, during the 1995 Haitian legislative and presidential elections, the U.S. spent approximately $18.8 million towards technical assistance, providing observers, and paying election officials' salaries. Furthermore, U.S. officials, and NGO members paid by the U.S. government, assisted in the observation of the elections and increased the credibility of the electoral process.[157]

Additionally, in 1995 alone, three U.S. NGOs spent $2.12 million dollars of USAID Democracy Enhancement Project grants on Haitian election activities, with a significant portion of this funding earmarked for institutionalizing political parties. The NGO that received the most funding, the National Democratic Institute for International

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[156] Starr, 2000, p. 134.

[157] GAO, 1996, p. 2.

Affairs (NDI), conducted political party and consensus-building seminars, and in conjunction with the International Republican Institute (IRI), also trained poll observers from multiple political parties. Perhaps most impressively, in August 1995, NDI sent three Haitian political party leaders to an NDI-sponsored conference in Africa on managing election-related disputes.[158] Clearly, the U.S. government is directly involved in promoting party system institutionalization in Haiti.

Furthermore, among all of the nations in Latin America that receive U.S. financial assistance for democracy programs, no other nation has received more than Haiti since 1995.[159] In the final quarter of 1994 following the reinstatement of Aristide, the State Department alone spent nearly $22 million towards supporting this reestablished democracy. Although the documentation of funds spent strictly on democracy programs worldwide was not initiated until 1998, USAID information shows that Haiti received more overall funding assistance than any other Latin American nation between 1995-1997. During these years, Haiti received an average of over $107 million per year, an amount that would be only slightly increased during 1998-2000.[160]

While strengthening democratic institutions has remained a top U.S. priority in Haiti since the intervention, the focus of State Department efforts has recently shifted. Since 1998, a smaller percentage of funds has been going towards democratic

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[158] GAO, 1996, p. 23.

[159] Secretary of State, 2000, p. 898.

[160] See the Secretary of State's Congressional Publication for Foreign Operations for FY 1994 to FY 1997 for a further analysis of DoS funding in Haiti and Latin America.

consolidation efforts while an increased percentage of funds have been routed towards economic assistance and other programs. As the Department of State reported,

> Beginning in 1999, we will shift our strategic focus in Haiti from immediate restoration of democracy and economic recovery to longer-term, poverty reduction programs geared to build up municipal institutions and capabilities.[161]

Resultantly, from 1998 to 2000, democratic development programs lost $6.46 million in funds, while the amount of funding for economic development, over the same period, increased by $7.88 million (See Table 1.). Although funding for democracy programs in Haiti decreased, this nation still receives the largest amount of U.S. financial aid for this goal than any other nation in the hemisphere.

While poverty-reduction is a critical necessity in Haiti, should the State Department pursue such programs at the expense of assisting in the development of the Haitian party system and other democratic institutions? Granted, Haiti is the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, and as of 2000 an astounding 45% of its wealth lies in the hands of the richest one percent of the population. Clearly, every nation that hopes to achieve a basic level of democratic consolidation must have a sound economic infrastructure, and if any regional nation needs economic support, it is Haiti. The industrial sector employs approximately only 20,000 Haitians, while there are over 2.5 million people (70% of which are officially unemployed) living in Port-au-Prince alone. In a poverty-stricken nation like Haiti, economic aid and investment funds are needed in order to build an infrastructure and industrial base, yet such development requires funding that is obviously not available within the nation.

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[161] Secretary of State, 2000, p. 793.

Table 1. Federal Budget (International Affairs): FY 1998–2000 ($ thousands).

	FY 1998 (Actual)	FY 1999 (Estimate)	FY 2000 (Request)
Total, International Affairs Budget (IAB)	$19,069,672	$22,456,383	$21,311,445
Total, Global Democracy Assistance Programs (GDAP)	$580,063 (3.04% IAB)	$622,917 (2.77% IAB)	$709,410 (3.33% IAB)
Total, Western Hemisphere Affairs Budget (WHAB)	$1,332,940 (6.99% IAB)	$1,616,532 (7.20% IAB)	$1,408,825 (6.61% IAB)
Total, Western Hemisphere Democracy Programs (WHDP)	$95,937 (16.53% GDAP) (7.20% WHAB)	$88,232 (14.16% GDAP) (5.46% WHAB)	$112,706 (15.89% GDAP) (8.00% WHAB)
Total, Haitian Affairs Budget (HAB)	$122,836 (9.22% WHAB)	$117,320 (7.26% WHAB)	$115,470 (8.20% WHAB)
Total, Haitian Economic Development Programs	**$29,311** **(25.98% HAB)**	**$35,714** **(30.44% HAB)**	**$37,192** **(32.21% HAB)**
Total, Haitian Democracy Programs	**$23,275** **(18.95% HAB)** **(24.26% WHDP)**	**$16,760** **(14.29% HAB)** **(19.00% WHDP)**	**$16,815** **(14.56% HAB)** **(14.92% WHDP)**

Unfortunately, private actors will not be willing to invest funds into a non-functional economy. Therefore, private funds from either international loan agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), or from nation-to-nation aid must be provided in order to stimulate basic economic development. As Professor Starr of Mexico states,

> For countries such as Bolivia, Guyana, Haiti, and Nicaragua…the obstacles to development are more fundamental than those of their richer neighbors. These regions lack the basic physical and human infrastructure

essential for productive private investment. Until the time-cosuming and difficult process of building this infrastructure is complete, the private sector will be a minor source of development finance at best[162]

Nonetheless, is it prudent to decrease the amount that goes toward strengthening democratic institutions, especially when not all of the funds earmarked for democracy programs benefits the institutionalization of the party system? For example, according to information provided on the USAID website, of the $16,815,000 requested for FY 2000 democracy programs, $4,575,000 (27%) was to go towards strengthening law enforcement and the judicial system. The remaining $12,240,000 was for the program designed to promote "more meaningful inclusion of citizens in the process of democratic governance."[163]

While no further monetary breakdown exists for this program vis-à-vis distinct programs, the main goal of the overall program would incorporate party system institutionalization, primarily via the aim of increasing "Haitian citizens' participation at all levels: elections, justice, national and local government and civil society."[164] And although no evidence was given that political parties had become more institutionalized, social organizations, which have been shown in an earlier chapter to simplify the recruitment efforts of political parties, have benefited. For example, during FY 1999, "More than 1,200 civil society organizations…have constructively engaged in policy discussions and debates on the topics of decentralization, poverty alleviation and the

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[162] Starr, 2000, p. 139.

[163] USAID, 2000, p. 12.

[164] USAID, 2000, p. 12.

environment. Associations and federations of local officials exist and are spearheading important decentralization initiatives."[165]

Ostensibly, an improvement in the financial state of the Haitian people should create a more politically perceptive constituency, in turn leading to self-driven democratic development. However, unless international actors continue to assist in the development of democratic institutions such as the party system, elite politicians may increase and centralize their power within the government. Therefore, further reductions in funding for democracy assistance programs should be viewed with caution.

2.   Diplomatic Efforts

Many aspects of United States diplomacy vis-à-vis Haiti in the years since Aristide's return have contributed to a further institutionalization of the party system. For example, the way in which the United States interacted with Aristide in late 1994, as he hinted that he might pursue an unconstitutional, three-year extension of his presidency, greatly supported the institutionalization of the Haitian party system. On November 23, the day before Aristide was to address a crowd of Lavalas supporters and possibly announce his candidacy, National Security Adviser Anthony Lake flew to Port-au-Prince and met with Aristide. At their meeting, Lake "reminded" Aristide of his pledge to the United States prior to *Operation Uphold Democracy* not to seek reelection.[166] The following week, the U.S. government reiterated its understanding that Aristide would not run, as Lake stated "We expect him to leave."[167]

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[165] USAID, 2000, p. 12.

[166] Pastor, 1997, p. 132.

[167] Darling, 1995, p. A6.

Two U.S. senators, any of whom often exert commensurate power as the executive concerning foreign policy matters, also publicly pressured Aristide to step down. Senator Bob Kerrey (D-Neb.) stressed, "We risked a lot of lives down there. If he doesn't support democracy we shouldn't support him." Senator Phil Graham, (R-Tex.) said that if Aristide violated his agreement to step down, "we should demand that he step down."[168] The same day that these quotes were published, November 27, due primarily to U.S. diplomatic pressure, Aristide announced that he indeed would step down at the end of his term. "I am leaving February 7," he simply relayed to an interviewer.[169]

If Aristide's presidency had been extended by three years, the party system would have been placed in serious jeopardy. It would have been clear that the ambitions of Aristide still dominated his party, further undermining the roots and legitimacy of the entire party system. Most importantly, if the Haitian Constitution had been either dismissed or distorted in order to cater to a popular leader, the rules of interparty competition would have been totally destabilized. Instead, as one editorial read, "By stepping down, Aristide will allow the impoverished Caribbean island nation to continue moving towards democracy…Rather than thwart the democratic process, Aristide should use his considerable popularity to ensure the peaceful transfer of power."[170]

President Clinton's administration and the Department of State assisted the institutionalization of Haiti's party system during the Preval presidency through supporting sound initiatives while also condemning undemocratic actions by the

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[168] *Asheville Citizen-Times*, 1995, p. 3A.

[169] As quoted in the *Chicago Tribune*, 1995, p. 6.

[170] *Chicago Sun-Times*, 1995, p. 49.

government and opposition parties alike. The most critical diplomatic efforts were undertaken during the two-year political deadlock following the April 1997 legislative elections and controversial CEP handling of those contests. The United States applied pressure on all parties, including members of both the Preval administration and opposition leaders, to seek a compromised solution to the deadlock. Without this continuous diplomatic involvement and support for negotiations, there would have been a greater chance that the party system could have permanently collapsed into violence.

Under George W. Bush's administration, the United States has continued to decry actors in Haiti that have attempted to circumvent the electoral process. One example is the Convergence Alliance and its establishing of a provincial government in protest against alleged voting irregularities during the 2000 presidential elections. Although this contest was flawed and the U.S. voiced its objection to a lack of compromise by the ruling party, the United States gave public legitimization to the democratic process by rejecting the tactics of the opposition. In February 2001, Bush sent a letter to Aristide supporting his administration and stressing the importance of the Lavalas government to respect an eight-point agreement signed between Aristide and representatives of former President Clinton designed to "strengthen government institutions."[171] Concurrently, the U.S. Ambassador to Haiti Dean Curran stated that the alternative government would "not advance the prospects for dialogue or a solution to the political crisis."[172]

However, some policy makers in Washington have assumed positions that if pursued would undermine the institutionalization of the Haitian party system. In

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[171] *BBC*, February 20, 2001.

[172] Williams, February 6, 2001.

particular, those who would see the Convergence Alliance as a "democratic alternative" to the Aristide government are tragically mistaken. Several conservative Congressmen, most notably Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC), are the greatest sources of U.S. support for Convergence.[173]

Senator Helms, the former Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and his allies in Washington, including former Chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, Benjamin Gilman (R-NY) and Representative Porter Goss (R-FL) possess considerable political power. These individuals described the Haitian Presidential election of November 2000 as a "sham election with the sole purpose of delivering absolute control over Haiti's government to Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide."[174] Instead of trying to aid Haiti's electoral system and pursue reforms to institutionalize the party system, they would rather embrace the Convergence Alliance. These individuals would claim Convergence is a democratic alternative, yet it is an organization with "modest popular standing" and no legal mandate that only a fair election can provide.[175]

No matter how much some U.S. policy makers dislike or mistrust President Aristide, by supporting an unconstitutional and illegitimate alternative, these individuals threaten to undermine not only the party system, but also the entire fate of Haitian democracy. Convergence has a right to protest the government and try to negotiate the rules of the electoral system, as any party or coalition within an institutionalizing party system enjoys. However, the establishment of an alternative government outside of the

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[173] Jean-Pierre, 2001, p. 57.

[174] *Haiti Progres*, 2000.

[175] Birns, 2001.

national electoral system stands in direct opposition to the role of political parties within a democratic government. Every time political leaders in Washington lend support to this body, they threaten party institutionalization in Haiti.

VI.   CONCLUSION

Factors that inhibit the development of an institutionalized party system remain in Haiti, and it is doubtful that this poor nation will be able to overcome these obstacles without outside assistance. This final chapter summarizes the findings of the thesis and offers recommendations as to how the United States may assist Haiti in overcoming the present inhibiting factors against an institutionalized party system.

If inchoate democracies worldwide are to achieve democratic consolidation, then the institutionalization of these nations' various government systems, including party systems, must be attained. However, difficulties will inevitably be encountered within any nation in their struggle to institutionalize their party system. Such negative factors include the lack of organization in society around shared interests, the absence of initial party development during the earliest stages of state building, and negative elite behavior such as oppression against political opponents and corrupt practices.

As this thesis examined the history of the Haitian political system from the fight for independence to the 1994 intervention, it became clear that all of these factors have hindered the development of a political party system. Haiti was a nation dominated by violent and ruthless leaders who cared little for either democracy or justice. Such political leaders, most notably the Duvaliers in the latter half of the twentieth century, created a political environment that continues to undermine the efforts of political reformers who attempt to pursue democratic consolidation and party system institutionalization in Haiti.

More recently, President Aristide has also contributed to the weakening of the Haitian party system. Aristide, the central figure in modern Haiti's democracy, is a man whose personal charisma rapidly carried him to the presidency in both 1990 and 2000.

Despite the fact that Aristide attained victory in legitimate elections, these victories were products of a non-institutionalized party system. Aristide's actions and relations with the other sectors of the government, including his own and other parties, contributed to political turmoil that ultimately damaged the progress of democratic consolidation in Haiti.

Since the 1994 intervention, Haiti's political party system has failed to achieve institutionalization. Electoral rules have been continuously debated as opposition parties boycotted elections and the legislature collapsed. Ultimately, however, one of the primary factors behind this failure was the actions of Haitian political elites. The fact that both President Aristide and his opponents have been unwilling to make compromises in order to develop the necessary rules and framework for an institutionalized party system has contributed directly to the dire political situation present today.

Furthermore, United States policy toward Haiti has rarely been based upon promoting democratic ideals. Throughout the nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries, the United States placed far more importance on securing economic and security interests than supporting democratic regimes or political actors. The open support of the brutal Duvalier regimes during the Cold War is the most blatant example of the United States sacrificing democratic ideals in order to pursue more immediate goals such as the defeat of international Communism.

However, since the United States committed to implementing armed force in order to reinstate President Aristide in 1994, many policy makers in Washington have increased their support for furthering Haitian democracy. Through the efforts of many

actors, but primarily the State Department and USAID, the United States has continued to assist not any particular regime or individual, but instead the entire Haitian democratic system. Primarily, economic and financial support for Haiti's democratic government and independent organizations such as political parties following the intervention has achieved successes despite the efforts of some U.S. political leaders to undermine Haiti's democratically elected leaders.

As Haiti looks to the future, it is evident that with outside assistance and positive change on behalf of political elites within this small nation, party system institutionalization can progress. The following are recommendations for those U.S. policy makers who would attempt to support Haitian democracy and the institutionalization of this nation's political party system.

Nothing can change the absence of initial party development in Haiti during the earliest phases of state building. Furthermore, Haiti has suffered centuries of violent and oppressive history, resulting in a predatory political culture that for nearly two hundred years dominated the government. Such ingrained obstacles cannot be disposed of quickly. The best way in which the United States can deal with this factor is by acknowledging how the past environment of abused power still undermines the Haitian electorate's confidence in political and economic elites. An institutionalization of the party system will almost assuredly have to come about gradually, since time will be required for all Haitians to develop trust and confidence in their party system.

Additionally, because of the repetitive misfortune that Haiti's political system has endured over the past two centuries, the United States should investigate the idea of

helping Haiti restructure its system of representative government. This thesis argues that the very structure of Haiti's electoral system may be an impediment to party system institutionalization. In the Haitian government, a "winner-takes-all" system exists where "only by winning a majority in any given district can a party win representation in the legislature." The result in Haiti is that a single political party "commands the allegiance of a substantial majority but is resented by powerful minorities."[176]

Consequently, Aristide's Lavalas Family has secured an overwhelming majority in the national legislature, as opposition parties, even when they represent a significant minority, are shut out from the democratic process. A possible solution would be to amend the 1987 Constitution so that a proportional representation system is established in which seats are distributed in proportion to the percentage of votes attained. While this would still give Aristide's party a majority in both houses, at least other parties would be able to have more proportional involvement in the national government. Under these circumstances, opposition parties would see they have a chance to gain at least some seats during nationwide elections. With the prospect of gaining "a meaningful stake in democracy," political parties would most likely not be as willing to boycott elections, thus furthering the democratic process for all Haitians.[177]

Another inhibiting factor is a lack of social organization via shared interests. Stagnant economic development, which in turn results in a lack of an organized middle class and a disenfranchised electorate, is the primary continuing cause behind this

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[176] Reding, 1996, p. 21.

[177] Reding, 1996, p. 22.

handicap in Haiti. Currently, overcoming this factor is the focus of State Department and USAID efforts, and this area of development will require sustained effort and will most likely take many years to achieve lasting, meaningful change. This thesis recommends that the United States maintain both financial and political support for the Haitian government in its efforts to improve the nation's economic structure, and thus overcome an obstacle that has hindered party system institutionalization.

The final, and most critical, factor that Haiti must overcome is the corrupt and selfish interests of political elites. A lack of Haitian elite support for an institutionalized party system, even after the democratic elections of 1990, hampered its development. The rules of the electoral system were not stabilized, party roots did not develop successfully, and it became clear that individuals' ambitions often manipulated parties in order to pursue personal political agendas. It is imperative that the United States continues in its efforts to hold Haitian elites accountable to the ideals and rules of their democratic system in order for party system institutionalization to continue.

An added benefit of addressing this factor is that when elites do improve the way in which they act within a party system, immediately beneficial results can occur. While no one can change history, and it may take years for social organizations to demonstrate significant improvements, elite actions can effect a nation's political system instantaneously. However, isolated improvements in the actions of elites will not be sufficient for party system institutionalization. Ultimately, while foreign assistance can help, Haitian political leaders themselves must be willing to place the political party system above their own opportunistic interests.
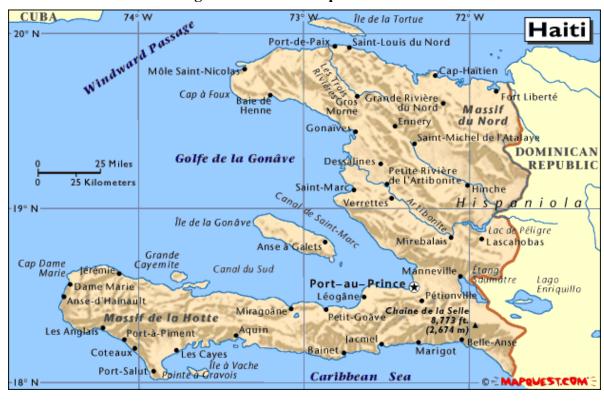
Figure 1. Political Map of Haiti[178]

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